

OIC head urges end to wars, stresses need to improve image of Islam

CASABLANCA, Morocco (Agencies) — Ministers from Muslim states got down to business here Sunday after a long and arduous journey to Casablanca to attend the opening of the Islamic Conference of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit.

Foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference were to discuss Bosnia, Islamic militancy, and other conflicts involving Muslims ahead of the OIC summit starting in Casablanca Tuesday.

"Islam... is a message of peace and tolerance addressed to the entire universe," OIC Secretary General Hamid Algabid told the ministers at the opening of talks late Saturday.

But now "Our Islamic world has fallen prey to all kinds of conflicts, notably in Palestine, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Somalia," he said.

These troubles were a result of "foreign aggression or deadly confrontations among national factions," he told the group gathered under a tent outside a luxury hotel.

In addition, he continued, "the image of our religion and its followers has undergone a serious distortion," either because of ignorance or "skillfully orchestrated manipulation."

To meet these challenges, the OIC's 50 Muslim states and the Palestine Liberation Organisation must "closely cooperate" to find solutions to illiteracy and technological "backwardness," he said.

Before heading to the summit from Cairo, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak urged the OIC to stop religious extremism which he said hurt the image of Islam.

The ministers are to review an unprecedented plan to stop the export of fundamentalist violence.

It calls for the OIC members to refuse to finance or support "terrorist acts" and to make sure their territory is not used by violent groups to plan or carry out attacks.

The plan was developed by Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Turkey, who have all seen a sharp increase in the threat from fundamentalism since the last OIC summit was held in Senegal in December 1991.

On an issue that has troubled its relations with the West, the organisation is trying to adopt a plan to prevent rebel Bosnian Serb forces from conquering the whole of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It is offering to provide Muslim troops to replace U.N. peacekeepers from Western nations, should they withdraw from the war-torn former Yugoslav republic.

Muslim countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Jordan already contribute forces.

Under proposals to be debated by the ministers and submitted to the summit, the United Nations will be urged to broaden U.N. "safe areas" in Bosnia — areas under international protection.

Repeating the OIC's long-held stance that the U.N. arms embargo against Bosnia should be lifted, the proposals stress the need for the government in Sarajevo to have the means to defend itself.

Some delegates were pushing for an even stronger resolution but gave no details.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic is to participate as an observer at the OIC summit, which will be attended by other heads of government and heads of state.

The ministers were also to discuss the status of Jerusalem and the Palestinian problem.

They were asked to support Muslim minorities in the Philippines and Bulgaria.

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Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in Morocco earlier in the day Jerusalem would also be high on the agenda of the Dec. 13-14 Islamic summit.

"With all due respect, the issue is not for the Islamic summit to decide on," Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali said in a speech delivered on his behalf at a seminar on Jordanian-Palestinian ties which opened in Amman Saturday.

But Mr. Majali said the summit could contribute funds to support Arab housing projects in Jerusalem and maintain holy monuments in an effort "to keep the Arab identity of Jerusalem."

"Regarding the right of supervision of the holy places, it remains not negotiable. Therefore, we hope that our brothers would understand the situation and its reasons," he said.

Mr. Majali's remarks followed fears that the PLO, Saudi Arabia and Morocco, each for different reasons, could join hands over Jerusalem, and corner Jordan at the summit.

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General view of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference's (OIC) ministerial meeting in Casablanca (AFP photo)

Divided Druze families on Golan exchange news by megaphone

QUNEITRA, Syria (AFP) — Druze families on the Golan Heights, separated by the border created by Israeli forces in 1967, have to resort to megaphones to exchange news.

Dozens of inhabitants of Majdel Shams gather several times a week to hear news from their relatives who remain in five Druze villages now occupied by Israel, 300 metres away.

Imad, 25, travelled from Damascus to speak to his parents who live in the village of Baqata in the Israeli-occupied Golan.

"Are you still a bad worker?" asks his father Suleiman, his voice echoing off the slopes of snow-capped Mount Hermon.

Imad bursts into laughter. "Of course, and God willing I'll be returning in May," he replies.

He is one of several dozen Golan Druze allowed by Israel to study in Damascus, some 15,000 Syrian Druze live on the Israeli-occupied heights.

A final-year dental student, Imad wants to go home to practise after his exams.

On the other side of the valley cousins and friends scramble to speak through the megaphone to Imad. Briefly they are interrupted

by an Israeli army truck passing along the road below.

"We are keeping quiet to avoid creating difficulties for our families," Imad says.

The distant figure of Hassan Fakhreddin cries out: "We are hostages, of course."

"But we will never give in, Israel must return the whole of the plateau. Syria is our country, our mother. Nobody can ever forget his mother."

Israel occupied three-quarters of the Golan Heights, which overlook the Galilee region of Israel to the west and the Damascus road to the east.

Some 12,000 Israeli settlers live on the strategic plateau, which is the chief stumbling block in the Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

Damascus wants Israel to promise first to return all of the Golan, seized in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

Israel has demanded a commitment for peace with open borders before negotiating the scale of any withdrawal.

The town of Quneitra, bulldozed and dynamited by Israeli troops, remains a symbol of Syria's determination to recover its land.

The Israeli army destroyed 99 per cent of the town of 50,000 before pulling out in June 1974.

They used the hospital for target practice, and still occupy a small area of the razed town.

Syria has built a "new Quneitra" a few kilometres away, and plans to preserve the ruins in memory of the occupation.

Only 14 people remain in the ghost town. They include Zohdi Shakal, his wife and four children. A Circassian born in Quneitra in 1936, Zohdi has resisted Israeli pressure to leave and has been assisted by Red Cross officials.

The house where he was born was blown up. His present home, full of flowers and cats, is like a small oasis in a desolate wasteland.

Zohdi favours peace. "It's always better to live in peace with one's neighbours. But first the Israelis must give us back our land."

Official Syrian-Israeli peace talks have been suspended since the Feb. 25 massacre of 29 Muslims by a Jewish settler in a Hebron mosque.

However, the two sides will hold talks soon in Washington paving the way to a resumption of bilateral negotiations, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara said Friday.

CAIRO (AFP) — A 2,000-year-old tomb containing the mummy of a child was discovered Saturday next to a controversial motorway which slices past the pyramids.

Egyptian Culture Minister Farouq Hosni said. President Hosni Mubarak last month ordered a halt to construction work on the motorway, which will pass within 2.5 kilometres of the Sphinx and the three pyramids at Giza, just outside Cairo, pending the outcome of an archaeological study into the possible effects of the road.

The archaeological team from the Organisation of Egyptian Antiquities has discovered the mummy of a child in a tomb carved out of rock, which confirms the existence of a cemetery on the motorway. Mr. Hosni said. Archaeologists discovered pots and glassware next to the mummy, he added, quoted by the daily Al Akhbar's Sunday edition.

UNESCO led the international outcry over building the motorway close to the last of the seven ancient wonders of the world still in existence.

Iran invites groups to visit prisons

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Iran

NEWS IN BRIEF

by ties with Israel
Kawar has been...
omalia clan battle
...
y found near pyramids
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AWARDING ACHIEVEMENT: Depicting the Amman Baccalaureate School. Awardees for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, which test their academic physical and social strengths as well as their commitment to civic duties of the golden Crown Prince Award at duty (Petra photo)

'Contractor of collapsed building was not JCA-registered'

AMMAN (Petra) — The contractor who was constructing the five-storey building that collapsed in Nazzal suburb Saturday was not registered with the Jordan Contractors Association (JCA), JCA officials Sunday revealed.

At a press conference at the association, JCA Secretary Raouf Shadid and association board member Salhi Al Zu'bi said a JCA team inspected the structure of the building on Oct. 29 and discovered that the contractor was not a JCA member, constituting a violation of the association's regulations.

No one was hurt in the incident Saturday evening. Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi said at the site Saturday that although the building was licensed by the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) as meeting building codes, it was too early to determine who was responsible for the collapse of the structure.

The JCA officials said after its team's visit to the site in October, the contractor was fined and issued a warning by the association.

They said the incident proves the importance of having only JCA-registered contractors carrying out construction projects.

"As a contractors association we strongly demand adherence to the eighth article of the Contractors Association Law and call for action to be taken to monitor contractors' work in that no one can carry out works without being registered and classified by the association...so that yesterday's incident would not be repeated," they said.

They also stressed the need for cooperation among the Greater Amman Municipality, the JCA and other concerned authorities to control the contracting sector.

Mr. Shadid and Mr. Zu'bi said the association has previously fined and issued warnings to 400 contractors in Jordan, noting that it was all the association can do because it is not an executive authority.

They said any contractor remains responsible for structures he/she builds for a period of 10 years and cannot violate any of the construction codes even if it were at the request of the building owner.

They said engineering consultancy offices should only cooperate with JCA-registered contractors in accordance with the eighth article of the association's law.

They also said the Amman Municipality has no legal jurisdiction over the issue, saying that the Governor of Amman has set up a technical committee to study Saturday's incident.

Article VIII of the Contractors Association Law stipulates that no Jordanian or non-Jordanian person or firm can become a practising contractor without being registered with the association.



THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTARY WORK: Participants Sunday attend a two-day workshop on voluntary organisations opened at the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Development Complex. The workshop, organised by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) in cooperation with a German voluntary organisation, will discuss the role of pioneering voluntary societies in Jordan and Europe and training offered to their personnel. President of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Abdullah Al Khatib said in an opening address that the three main social problems facing Jordan — poverty, unemployment and foreign debt — require the collaboration of the Kingdom's governmental and non-governmental organisations. Other addresses were also delivered by Director of QAF's Projects' Planning Department Amer Bakir and other officials (Petra photo)

WHAT'S GOING ON

- The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.
- PIANO RECITAL**
 - A Four-hand Piano Recital by Francisco Roig and Paloma Sanchez De Leon at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
 - FILMS**
 - Film (in French) entitled "Coup De Foudre" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
 - Film (in English) entitled "Donatello: the First Modern Sculptor" (with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khalid Khreis) at Darat Al Funn at 5:30 p.m.
 - Novel Recital**
 - Novel recital by novelist Umayma Nasser at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:30 p.m.
 - EXHIBITIONS**
 - Art exhibition by Ammar Khammash and Fadi Mimi at Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).
 - Exhibition of home furnishings and furniture entitled "Colours and Crafts" at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development new offices, Al Madina Al Munawara Street.
 - Exhibition of portraits by Fahrreissa Zeid and the exhibition of contemporary Arab artist at Darat Al Funn.
 - Exhibition of oil paintings by Salhan Abbas at Alia Art Gallery.
 - Exhibition of abstract art by several artists at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.
 - Exhibition of paintings by Ismail and Tamam Shamout at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.
 - Exhibition of Muna Saudi's private collection of contemporary arts and Jordanian antiques at Abdoum Village (Tel 829700).
 - Exhibition of paintings by Sadiq Kwaish at the French Cultural Centre.
 - Exhibition by Akram Naji Shaker at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
 - Exhibition by artists Latif Al Khateeb and Mubay Khakefa at the Housing Bank Gallery.

Couple dies of gas poisoning

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A man and his wife suffocated to death in their bathrooms in Al Quesmeh area Saturday from carbon monoxide poisoning, according to Public Security Department (PSD) reports.

Mustafa A., (28) and his wife, Samira A., (27) were in the bathroom with the door closed and apparently did not notice that a portable gas heater (in the bathroom) had stopped functioning but continued to emit the poisonous gas, said the report.

The couple's three-year-old daughter went to the neighbours' when she could not wake her parents up. "Mommy and Daddy won't wake up," a neighbour quoted the child as saying.

Liquefied natural gas, which is used in gas cylinders for heating and cooking, is colourless and poisonous. It is mainly a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen and is almost entirely combustible.

Accidents of the sort reported Saturday increase during the winter. Civil Defence Department officials have said, because the use of gas and kerosene heaters is common and "unfortunately some people are not cautious enough when handling and using this energy source."

Jordan votes against repeal of capital punishment law

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan joined other Islamic nations in voting against a motion submitted to the U.N. General Assembly to abolish capital punishment in their countries, stressing that the repeal of such laws would be contrary to the teachings of Islam.

Walid Obeidat, who represented Jordan at the special General Assembly committee meeting which voted against the rescinding of capital punishment, said that such severe punishment serves as a deterrent to criminals.

After three sessions of debate, the special General Assembly committee decided against urging nations to repeal their capital punishment laws. The actual vote on the motion was 44 nations against, 34 in favour, 74 states abstaining.

In an address to the committee, Mr. Obeidat said that Jordan rejected the call to abolish capital punishment because such a move would also contradict with the U.N. Charter itself and run contrary to the teachings of Islam.

The repeal of capital punishment would allow those who violate human dignity to hide behind the General Assembly's ruling and thus attempt to escape from punishment as stipulated in national laws, said Mr. Obeidat.

Noting that Jordan was proud of its Islamic heritage which guaranteed all peoples' rights including the right to life, Mr. Obeidat said that at the same time the country's laws impose severe punishment on anyone threatening the life of another or endangering society.

Commenting on the U.N. General Assembly vote, Minister of Justice Hisham Tel said that Jordan was intent on ensuring the legal defence and guaranteeing the rights of all persons accused of any crimes.

Capital punishment, he said, is only meted out in cases where an individual has endangered or taken the life of another.

The government appoints a defence lawyer for defendants who are unable to afford legal fees, added the minister.

Mr. Tel explained that under Jordanian law, when a guilty verdict results in a death sentence, the case is referred to the Court of Cassation which reexamines the entire case. He said the prosecutor general may or may not recommend the death penalty.

If the death penalty is recommended and the Court of Cassation approves the sentence the case is then referred to the justice minister who in turn refers it to the Council of Ministers and then to His Majesty King Hussein who is empowered to commute the sentence or order the execution upon the government's recommendations.

Thus, the minister said, capital punishment involves the executive as well as the judicial branches of the state.

CBJ chief sees increased prospect for trade exchanges, investments

AMMAN (Petra) — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Saeed Nabulsi said the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty has increased the prospect of capital and trade exchanges and investments because it created an atmosphere of tranquility and security for investors.

In a lecture at Al Arab Insurance Company on the benefits of peace to the banking and insurance industries, Dr. Nabulsi said the peace treaty has opened the road for development and modernisation and paved the ground for launching joint projects within the regional concept.

The peace treaty with Israel is expected to have beneficial consequences on the Jordanian economy, particularly the insurance sector, but the insurance companies have to adopt sound plans to cater to the changes and developments in the insurance market, said Dr. Nabulsi.

Stressing the need for the insurance sector to advance its cooperation with the banking sector, Dr. Nabulsi said that progress here can start with the modernisation of existing financial and insurance laws in a manner that would upgrade and improve concepts, policies and methods related to insurance operations.

He said that the insurance sector should embark on immediate research in order to come up with modern methods that would ensure the industry's progress in the coming stage.

Several working papers were presented to the meeting which also entailed an open debate on the work of insurance companies and their cooperation with banks.

The participants, who represented Jordanian banks and insurance companies, recommended that the Association of Banks in Jordan arrange for continuous contacts with insurance firms and work towards the creation of an institution to insure bank deposits.



Mohammad Nabulsi

Oil exploration continues, says energy minister

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government is seeking to enlist private sector firms to prospect for and exploit oil and gas in Jordan and is proceeding with plans to transfer the work of the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) to a private oil company, said Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Talal Ureiqat.

Addressing a seminar organised by the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) on petroleum in Jordan, the minister said that the search for oil constituted one of the main challenges for the Kingdom in the past two decades as the country witnessed intensive oil explorations by the NRA and foreign firms.

With the increase in the population, estimated at five per cent last year, the country is in need of additional quantities of oil and gas for domestic, industrial and other uses, he said.

Noting that Jordan's oil bill last year amounted to JD 315 million, the minister said that the sums paid for importing oil accounted for nine per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) or 15 per cent of the total value of imported goods.

Referring to gas production at the Rishsh fields, the minister said that Jordan's 1993 consumption of gas constituted 3.7 per cent of total fuel consumption for different purposes.

He said surveys and oil exploration covered only 10,000-square-kilometres of land out of a total of a 70,000-square-kilometre area of sedimentary rock where oil discovery is possible.

Mr. Ureiqat said that the NRA and foreign oil firms have so far dug 90 exploratory wells of which 76 were financed by the government, adding that JD 130 million has so far been spent on oil exploration in the country and the process was continuing.

Last July, the Council of Ministers announced its approval of a recommendation by a ministerial panel to set up a company to be entrusted with the exploration and exploitation of oil and gas.

In August, the minister announced that drilling for additional gas wells at Al Rishsh district was proceeding to increase quantities of extracted gas used to generate electricity.

He said that the six existing gas wells at Al Rishsh produce a total of 26 million cubic feet of natural gas daily but the ministry needs more gas to raise to 20 per cent from 15 per cent the total amount of electric power generated by natural gas in Jordan.

Azzam Huneidi of the JEA Geology Department addressed the meeting held at the Professional Association Complex outlining his department's activities in helping the country extract natural resources.

Several working papers were reviewed at the meeting, all focusing on oil exploration in the Kingdom and future prospects as well as the likelihood of exploiting oil shale to produce oil.



Talal Ureiqat



TOWARDS A TOURISM STRATEGY: Adwan said the ministry appreciated the cooperation of the government of Japan and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in conducting this study. The visiting team, which arrived in Jordan to prepare a comprehensive study on tourism development in the Kingdom, will start their work today with a Jordanian team. The scope of work covers developing a long term tourism strategy till the year 2010 for the entire country, and a detailed study that will cover the area from Amman to Aqaba, along which priority zones will be defined, according to a ministry spokesperson. Dr. Adwan said the ministry appreciated the cooperation of the government of Japan and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in conducting this study. The visit of this delegation follows a previous visit of another Japanese team which arrived in Jordan in mid-July to prepare a preliminary study on tourism in the country. Also attending the meeting were Ghassan Mufleh (left), secretary general of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and Dr. Abu Ayyash, assistant secretary general of the ministry (Petra photo)

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East Europeans return home with promises from EU

BRUSSELS (R) — East European leaders returned to their home capitals Sunday with a package of firm promises from the European Union (EU) that they would one day become members, though without knowing when.

The EU capped its end-of-year summit in the German city of Essen with a landmark meeting Saturday with the prime minister of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

During a workmanlike two-day summit, the EU leaders told the Easterners they would one day be members of the wealthy and democratic bloc and offered them cash and advice to get there.

The summit also agreed a broad action plan to fight unemployment in the EU, pledged to keep supporting peacekeeping troops in Bosnia and held out the prospect of a free-trade zone throughout the Mediterranean.

They heaped glowing praise on European Commission President Jacques Delors, who is leaving the executive in January after 10 years. Speculation on whether Mr. Delors would decide to run for French president next year was a constant sideshow during the

summit.

But it was the embracing of Eastern Europe that stole the show.

"I would not underestimate the symbolic importance of what happened today," Vaclav Klaus, prime minister of the Czech Republic, said after the meeting with the EU.

In practical terms, the Easterners were offered trade concessions and the promise of a "white paper," effectively a guide book, on how to harmonise their laws with the EU's single market and competition rules.

They were also promised a base line of financial support of at least 5.5 billion European Currency Units (\$6.65 billion) over the next five years.

Significantly, more of this money can now be spent on infrastructure, a liberalisation of EU rules eagerly sought by the easterners.

What they did not get, and what many have sought, is either a firm date by which to expect membership or a date for negotiations to start.

"It is important that we should not awaken false expectations," German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, the summit host and chairman, said.

The EU is holding off on offering a firm timetable partly reflecting the difficulty

of bringing in the poor economies of the East and partly because of a need for the bloc to sort out its own internal problems.

With three countries, Austria, Finland and Sweden, due to join in January and the six Eastern Europeans and others waiting in the wings, the EU leaders know they have to work out how the union will work in the future with as many as twice its current numbers.

Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez indicated he would get the ball rolling on this when he announced at the summit that he would call a special summit to discuss the EU's future during the Spanish EU presidency, which begins in July next year.

Spain, and France, which holds the EU presidency for six months beginning in January, are also likely to shift some of the emphasis away from the East.

In a move motivated by the concerns of France, Spain and other southern EU countries over security in the Mediterranean basin, the summit endorsed a new policy towards that region that envisages an eventual free-trade zone.

The southerners are worried about the rise of Islamic

fundamentalism in countries such as Algeria. They also fear the move to embrace the East will shift the EU's political balance too far away from them.

Meanwhile, groups favouring Switzerland admission to the European Union have decided to start legal moves to hold a national referendum on the membership issue, a spokesman said Sunday.

Under the Swiss constitution citizens can initiate a draft law if they collect the signatures of 100,000 registered voters in favour of the project.

Five out of eight pro-EU organisations voted Saturday night to initiate the referendum which would call for "Switzerland to participate in the process of European integration with a view to joining the European Union."

The text will be presented to the government Monday and its authors hope to gather the necessary signatures starting in February or March and completing their task before October 1995.

On Dec. 7, 1992 voters in a referendum turned down Switzerland's entry into the European Economic Area, a free trade zone which includes member countries of the European Free Trade Association and the EU.



French Premier Edouard Balladur (left) and the EU council meeting at the EU summit in Essen (AFP photo)

Pakistan generals discuss Karachi violence

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — Pakistani generals met Sunday in Karachi amid growing alarm over a deepening security crisis in the city where at least 76 people have been killed in the 11 days since troops pulled out.

Defence Ministry officials said the Joint Chiefs of Staff had been due to discuss defence and internal security issues, but gave no details.

The meeting followed talks Saturday between President Farooq Leghari, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, Sindh Province Chief Minister Abdullah Shah and military and intelligence chiefs.

The Karachi branch of Ms. Bhutto's ruling Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has demanded

the removal of Mr. Shah, accusing the chief minister of failing to maintain law and order in Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital.

Local PPP leaders voted for Mr. Shah's dismissal at a party meeting Saturday, party officials said.

Ms. Bhutto was also expected to face pressure on the issue from the opposition during a parliamentary debate scheduled for later Sunday.

A police spokesman said a gunman shot and wounded Mohammad Saleem, 25, in eastern Karachi Sunday, but no killings were reported following the deaths of four other people Saturday.

The spokesman said police

had arrested five people suspected of planning to kill an assistant sub-inspector of police and had seized three assault rifles from them.

Shootings involving rival factions of the ethnic Mohajir National Movement and militant Sunni and Shiite Muslim sects have rocked Pakistan's commercial capital since the army ended its 28-month deployment there on Nov. 30.

Officials say more than 650 people including 85 policemen, have been killed and hundreds more wounded in Karachi this year.

This month's mounting death toll has depressed the Karachi Stock Exchange and prompted increased demand for the dollar, dealers said.

Several bodies of sailors found, 2nd rescued from sunken Ukrainian ship

NEW YORK (R) — A second crew member was rescued and the bodies of several others retrieved Saturday as rescuers combed the chilly North Atlantic for survivors of a Ukrainian cargo ship that sank Friday in storm-tossed seas.

He was plucked to safety

Saturday morning by a helicopter after drifting 110 kilometres overnight after the sinking of the ill-fated ship with 31 crew members aboard.

"He was 70 miles southeast of where we thought he'd be," said Major Jim Finkle, a

spokesman for the New York Air National Guard.

The survivor was in good spirits and was able to walk to a waiting ambulance after the helicopter arrived at Shearwater Air Base in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Saturday evening, Finkle said.

Angolan minister wants interim force

LILONGWE (R) — Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister George Chikoti said in Malawi Sunday African states should send an interim peacekeeping force to his war-weary country until the United Nations decided to send troops.

"African countries... should get together with the Angolan government and send a peacekeeping force to Angola while we wait for a larger U.N. force to verify the peace process," Chikoti told Reuters.

A shaky ceasefire has been in force since Nov. 22, two days after the Luanda government and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels signed peace accords in the Zambian capital Lusaka formally ending the 19-year long civil war.

The United Nations, which plans to send 7,000 peacekeepers to Angola, has delayed their deployment until it is sure both sides are serious about peace. The world body relies on the war rivals to report ceasefire violations.

China: Temporary legislature is 'imperative' for Hong Kong after 1997

HONG KONG (AFP) — A temporary legislative body must be set up in Hong Kong following the colony's handover to China in 1997, Beijing's top official on Hong Kong affairs was quoted as saying.

Lu Ping, director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, said that Britain had "holed" legislative arrangements for the post-1997 government, according to a Xinhua News Agency dispatch monitored here.

As a result, he said, a number of problems had arisen, making the establishment of a post-1997 interim legislative body "imperative." But Mr. Lu added that the body would have limited power and be disbanded after 12 months.

Mr. Lu was speaking at the end of a meeting in Beijing of a Chinese-appointed advisory committee on Hong Kong, also attended by Foreign Minister Qian Qichen.

Relations between Hong Kong and Britain have been strained since Governor Chris Patten came up with a democratic reform package for the colony in 1992, a watered-down version of which was pushed through the legislature this June.

Disputes over major infrastructure projects in Hong Kong, topped by a new airport, have also been irritants. China has blasted the reforms, which would broaden the electoral base here, saying they violated the terms of the 1984 joint declaration signed by Beijing and London on the colony's handover.

The Hong Kong government Monday said it would hold elections for the Legislative Council next year, despite Beijing's vow to dismantle the body after 1997.

Meanwhile, Mr. Qian urged Britain to cooperate on Hong Kong's future and said the colony's prosperity depended on that of the mainland, Xinhua said.

While noting that China was going by the principle of relying on "our own efforts," Mr. Qian told the Hong Kong Advisory Committee that Beijing wanted "earnest cooperation" from London.

"Only this kind of cooperation is constructive," the agency quoted him as saying.

He also stressed that Beijing would abide by the "one country, two systems" principle, and that patriarch Deng Xiaoping had set out to ensure the participation of Hong Kong residents in the post-1997 government.

Mr. Qian, who is also vice premier, repeated charges that unnamed parties inside and outside the colony were out to sabotage and cause instability in Hong Kong, and "we must strengthen our vigilance over such factors."

"So long as the Chinese nation is prosperous, Hong Kong will certainly be prosperous," he said.

Cuban exiles march, chant against Castro

MIAMI (R) — Up to 50,000 Cuban exiles jammed the streets of Miami and its famed Orange Bowl Stadium Saturday in a giant rally to lobby leaders at the Summit of the Americas to help free Cuba from communism.

Protesters shouting "Cuba si, Castro no" packed Miami's Little Havana district waving red, white and blue Cuban flags and sporting T-shirts bearing slogans like "Fidel: the hour of your trial is nearing."

Police said the demonstration was peaceful and there were no arrests.

"The demonstration shows we will not be tired. We are not going to cease until Castro is exposed for what he is — a criminal," Cuban exile leader Jorge Mas Canosa told reporters at a rally in the Orange Bowl which ended the demonstration.

Southern Florida has an estimated 600,000 Cuban-Americans and the marchers were determined not to miss the opportunity to show the 34 summit leaders just how much they hate Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

"I wish we could chop him up little by little into pieces like ground beef," said Aida Lopez Blakeslee. "I left Cuba 32 years ago. I still have nightmares in my sleep about

Castro."

Federico Gonzalez, another demonstrator, held up a mock severed head of Castro speared on a wooden pole with one of its eyes hanging out and blood pouring out of its mouth. Underneath was written "the solution."

"This is my dream," he shouted. "The dream of all Cubans."

A multi-coloured quilt was draped around the stadium in memory of 10,000 Cubans the exiles said had been murdered by Mr. Castro's government.

"I am ready to take up arms to liberate our country," shouted Isidro Montano, a self-described guerrilla who claimed to be one of six survivors from a bloody battle with Castro forces in the early 1960s.

"We want the presidents in Miami to liberate Cuba from this Communist tyranny by military force," he added.

Reinforcing the exiles' plea for military intervention was a giant white banner attached to the front of a van reading "Mr. President, what about freeing Cuba? Are you chicken?"

"We don't want American blood spilled!" screamed taxi driver Pedro Castano. "We have enough of our own to

spill to get rid of Castro. Just let us fight and we will get rid of that dictator in 72 hours."

Some of the protesters carried simple white wooden crosses in memory of loved ones who died at sea while trying to escape from Cuba by crossing the treacherous Straits of Florida.

Meanwhile, leaders attending the Summit of the Americas agreed Saturday to hold a summit in Bolivia in early 1998 on the issue of sustainable development, a White House official said.

"There will be a follow-up summit on sustainable development in Bolivia early in 1998," White House Environmental Policy Director Kathleen McGinty told reporters.

Ms. McGinty said there would also be ministerial-level meetings to work on this summit's pledges on a host of initiatives encompassed by the term "sustainable development," such as international cooperation to protect the environment, the promotion of the use of renewable energy resources and ensuring universal access to education and health care services.

"In that sense this summit is like no other one before because it has produced a commitment to sustainable development," she added.

U.S. senators arrive in N. Korea to discuss accord

SEOUL (Agencies) — Two influential U.S. senators arrived in North Korea Sunday to discuss the controversial nuclear accord reached between Washington and the North in October.

Paul Simon, a Democrat from Illinois, and Frank Murkowski, a Republican from Alaska who has criticised the accord, left by air from Beijing aboard a U.S. Air Force plane — The first American military aircraft to land in North Korea since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War. South Korea's Korean Broadcasting System reported.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency reported their arrival and said they were greeted by Song Ho-Gyong, adviser to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, and other officials.

They are due to travel to Seoul Monday for talks with South Korean officials, including President Kim Young-Sam and Foreign Minister Han Song-Joo.

The senators told reporters before leaving Beijing their visit was aimed at improving relations between Washington and North Korea and finding ways to ensure the nuclear accord is faithfully implemented, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency said in a report from the Chinese capital.

They said they would also discuss efforts to recover the remains of U.S. servicemen listed as missing in action from the Korean War, in which the United States backed South Korea, still a staunch ally.

According to Yonhap, the senators said they had meetings scheduled with several senior North Korean officials but would only be told after arriving in the capital, Pyongyang, if they could meet de facto North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il.

Sen. Murkowski, who will soon become chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, has expressed reservations about the October accord in which the United States said it would arrange the supply of new nuclear reactors worth \$4 billion to the North.

In return, North Korea agreed to freeze its existing nuclear programme which the West suspects was designed to make atomic weapons.

The Clinton administration, in the opening round of what could become a battle with the new Republican-dominated U.S. Congress, has defended the accord against senators like Murkowski and others who say it is flawed.

Sen. Murkowski has said he did not want the agreement scrapped but that "we should have a good hard look at it."

He questioned the U.S. compromise on its demand that North Korea let international monitors inspect two off-limits nuclear waste sites which could prove whether or not it has produced nuclear weapons before receiving economic and political benefits.

In Washington last week, U.S. and North Korean officials held what a senior U.S. State Department official called "cooperative and constructive" talks on establishing liaison offices in each other's capitals.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Hubbard said Friday that teams from the two countries would meet in the first quarter of next year to look at office sites. He did not predict when they would actually be established.

Mr. Hubbard said that during the talks U.S. officials emphasised the importance of a dialogue between North and South Korea, and raised the issue of North Korean missile exports that have long troubled Washington.

Other issues raised included terrorism, troop levels along the demilitarised zone (DMZ) which separates the two Koreas and human rights.

He said Washington would also eventually like to open a transit route to North Korea across the DMZ. The heavily fortified area is now closed to all travel except under special circumstances.

The two senators had originally hoped to fly back from North Korea across the DMZ after crossing over it into the North by road but were obliged to change their plan after objections from Pyongyang, a diplomat in Seoul said.

Other U.S. politicians, including former President Jimmy Carter, who visited the North in June, have already crossed both ways by road through the DMZ.

North Korea has said it would hold a regular Supreme People's Assembly session next week, and asked South Korean businessmen to delay a planned visit to Pyongyang, press reports said here Sunday.

"North Korea has asked for the visit to be put off until early next year, saying they will be busy with the Supreme People's Assembly session next week," an official of Samsung business group told the respected Seoul daily Dong-A.

The unidentified company official was in contact with North Koreans in Beijing to prepare for a trip by a 10-member delegation of the leading business group to be headed by Kang Jin-Koo, president of Samsung Electronics Co.

The delegation originally planned to enter the North Tuesday, after South Korea last week gave the green light to six firms, four conglomerates and two footwear makers, to visit the North.

South Korean monitors on North Korea news said the North usually holds two regular sessions of the assembly annually, in April and in December.

The spring session handles the budget, while the winter session approves appointments and passes new laws.

They noted that there had not been any official word about the upcoming assembly session, which is usually preceded by two weeks' notice.

Nor had there been any indication as to whether the rubber stamp parliament might elect the late President Kim Il-Sung's son and designated successor, Kim Jong-Il, as president during the upcoming session, they said.

Taiwanese film wins top movie awards

TAIPEI (AP) — Vive L'Amour, a Taiwanese movie about three people passing a winter evening in an empty apartment, won best film and best director awards at the Golden Horse Film Festival, the Chinese-language equivalent of Hollywood's Oscars.

Joan Chen, a Chinese-American known for her roles in Twin Peaks and The Last Emperor, won best actress for Red Rose, White Rose. Tony Leung from Hong Kong won best actor for his role in Chungking Express. Both are Hong Kong films. Wang Po-Sen and Elaine Jin captured the best supporting actor and actress awards for the Taiwanese movie A Confucian Confusion.

Vive L'Amour, the second feature film from 36-year-old director Tsai Ming-Liang, share the Golden Lion Film Award at the Venice Film Festival with Macedonia's Before the Rain. In an interview, Tsai said Taiwan's 7-year shift from virtual dictatorship to democracy has infused Taiwanese films with new "vitality and creativity."

"There have been gradual changes," Tsai told the Associated Press. "In the past, our creativity was stifled by political and social restrictions." The Golden Horse Awards are regarded as the equivalent of the Academy Awards for Chinese-language films outside mainland China. Last year, the Golden Horse Festival established a special award for mainland Chinese movie makers or actors, in recognition of the growing detente between China and Taiwan, which China regards as a renegade province. But no special award was presented this year because none of the contestants won more than two thirds of the 19 referees' votes. Taiwan only allows mainland Chinese films to be shown if mainlanders make up less than half of the principal actors.

Bardot breaks pledge not to return to Saint-Tropez

SAINT-TROPEZ, France (AFP) — Sex kitten turned animal activist Brigitte Bardot has returned to Saint-Tropez six months after pledging not to set foot again in the chic French Riviera resort where she made her long-term home. According to witnesses, the former superstar actress was spotted Saturday walking down a Saint-Tropez street with friends. Bardot, who has lived in the Paris region since quitting the town in June amid a public row with its Mayor Jean-Michel Couve, returned to spend Christmas with husband Bernard D'Ormal at her villa, the local Var-Martin newspaper reported. Bardot had quit the town after the local council hosted a hunters' congress, vowing "never to return" while Couve was still mayor.

Bride convicted of helping groom rape daughter

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP) — A woman was convicted of failing to notify police that her 7-year-old daughter had been beaten and raped by the woman's AIDS-infected groom at their wedding reception. The child tested positive for the HIV virus. She and her mother are not being identified by the Associated Press to protect the child's privacy. The 38-year-old woman was convicted of felony child endangerment and being an accessory to rape. She faces a maximum sentence of nearly seven years, Frank Bridges, a former juvenile probation officer, was sentenced in June to 38 years in prison after admitting to five felony counts related to the Jan. 13 attack. Mr. Bridges, 43, whose surname is different from his stepdaughter's, refused to testify against his wife at her trial. On the couple's wedding day, Mr. Bridges lured the child to a bedroom, promising to reward her with a dollar. Once there, bridges locked the door, hit the girl and raped her. Hearing his sister's screams, then seeing her bloodstained dress, a 10-year-old brother dialed 911. Jurors heard a tape of the girl and the mother's voice screaming, "don't, don't, don't." Prosecutors claimed the mother hung up and refused to answer when the operator called back.

Russian armoured units Sunday began their advance on Chechnya (AFP photo)

out the judge, even though earlier, similar petition was rejected by Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmad. Legal sources said further petitions were expected.

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Women deserve better

THESE SEEMS to be no end to the misfortunes of women. Abortion, female circumcision, rape, physical abuse, sexual harassment, sexism, social and moral restrictions: The list goes on endlessly, and threatens women's psyche and their well-being from birth. It's impossible for women not to experience at least one of the litany of woes facing them. Despite tremendous efforts by women's movements all over the world, no tangible progress has been achieved. In international meetings and conferences, participants and experts address cultural specifics instead of focusing on the root cause. Inadequate education, societal and moral traditions and patriarchal cultures all contribute to women's suffering. The societies may differ — Western, Muslim, Asian — but there's still suffering.

In this part of the world, for example, a woman can be executed by a male relative or beaten to death if her family suspects that she had sexual contacts or just a relationship outside the bond of marriage. This can happen even in cases of rape! In Africa, the genitalia of some women are circumsized to decrease sexual desire and prevent them from becoming sexually promiscuous. In some poor countries women are married at a young age to men their families choose. Often, they are not consulted. In developed countries, like the United States, oppression is more sophisticated. Women in these countries often face sexual harassment, being battered by a spouse or mate, or raped.

Then there are the social and moral pressures that women have to put up with just because they are women — the stigma of divorce, the choice and consequences of abortion and the aftermath of rape. Women are victims, culprits and the ones who should pay for everybody's mistakes all at the same time. Religious and moral fury shake the earth if a woman is accused of having an abortion or committing adultery, but indifference prevails when hundreds of women get raped and beaten up every day.

The Cairo conference on population should have looked most of these issues. But instead, participants delved into heated discussions over abortion. The failure of such conferences to reach a consensus to upgrade women's status and thus the society's development might be due to the intolerance that exists among nations and individuals. The West accuses the East of women's repression and patriarchal-dominated concepts. The East points to the corruption and moral delinquency that plagues western societies. The conflict of whose ideology is better and who should have the final say turns ambitious meetings into battles. It's no wonder little progress has been made to abolish inequalities between sexes.

Perhaps a fresher look at the issue as a whole is needed. Whether through circumcision and segregation in the East, or rape and sexism in the West, repression and inequality are wrecking the lives of millions of women every day, every minute, everywhere. In 1995 an international conference on women is expected to be held in Beijing. The failure of this conference might be a failure to humanity. The issue is more than abortion or rape or segregation. It is the way the world at large perceives women and their role in society.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Rai Arabic daily Sunday criticised the continued mission of Rolf Ekeus, the U.N. envoy charged with supervising the elimination of Iraq's mass destruction weapons for saying that Iraq still possesses the potential to produce biological weapons. During the past four years Mr. Ekeus and his teams have been systematically destroying these weapons in Iraq, leaving nothing behind them except the Iraqi scientists who can produce the weapons, said Tareq Masarweh. If Mr. Ekeus means that the potential lies in the presence of the scientists themselves, we wonder if he wants them to be exterminated as well, said the writer. The United States tops the list of nations which continue to produce biological and nuclear weapons, but the United Nations is doing nothing against it and nothing to stop human rights violations in Bosnia and other regions of the world, said the writer. He said that Mr. Ekeus is making the claims to justify the perpetuation of the embargo on Iraq, to appease and satisfy the United States' desire and thus causing further suffering and starvation to the Iraqi people. The United Nations, added the writer, has its hands bound because it falls under U.S. influence and therefore it is not expected to end the injustice done to the Arab people of Iraq, said the writer. He said that the Islamic summit conference in Casablanca will not help put an end to the Iraqi tragedy because many of its participants serve as part of the coalition aligned behind the United States in its genocide against the Iraqi population.

THE NOBEL Peace Prize has been given to the Israeli leaders and President Yasser Arafat, but peace itself has not materialised on the ground, said Mohammad Kawash, a writer in Al Bustour. Judging from Israel's actions, its leaders are far from being intent on granting the Palestinians wider powers or pulling Israeli forces from the occupied Palestinian land, so no genuine peace can be established, said the writer. Until now Israel has not committed itself to full withdrawal and continues to hold on to its traditional policies of repression, mass punishment and aggression, which are clear signs it is not eager for peace, noted the writer. Despite Mr. Arafat's deals with Mr. Rabin and his government in Oslo and Cairo, and despite the joint declaration of principles in Washington, nothing concrete has materialised on the ground, leaving the future of the Palestinians in the balance, he added. The writer said that there can be no alternative to a return to concerted Arab stands and coordination between the Arab parties involved in the peace process so that a comprehensive settlement can be achieved.

HUMAN RIGHTS FILE

Universality vs. individuality of human rights

By Waleed M. Sa'di

THE 46th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that fell on Dec. 10, was yet another occasion to assess how the cause of human rights fares across the world. Of course real consensus on such a judgement continues to be elusive because the issue of human rights is still seen with double vision and applied with double standards.

Judging by the United Nations' reports on human rights violations across the world, I dare say that the promotion and protection of human rights is anything but satisfactory. Since the scope of human rights is so comprehensive and deals with every aspect of life, I believe that it still does not command priority consideration, in its totality, by most if not all nations of the world. Every country, or group of countries, has their own sets of priorities in the realm of human rights. Developing countries still regard their economic development as a higher priority objective than, for example, civil and political rights. Last year's Vienna World Conference on Human Rights attempted to harmonise different nations' perceptions of human rights, but succeeded only in a rhetorical sense. Poor states continue to downgrade many aspects of human rights as relatively insignificant in comparison with what they view as the more pressing economic and social rights of their peoples.

What also lessens the quest for universal respect for human rights, in all their dimensions, is the international mechanism of applying these rights. United Nations human rights bodies that have to cope with and monitor the application of a variety of human rights, ranging from civil and political to economic, social and cultural, are manned in part at least by members who belong to countries which are notorious for human rights violations. The human

rights experts that make up the composition of U.N. human rights committees or commissions are elected by U.N. or treaty-member states and there is considerable horse trading between them. It is not always sure that human rights considerations alone weigh heavily on the conscience of the electing governments.

Also relevant is the fact that international initiatives target only gross and systematic human rights violations. There is no problem with focusing the international attention on blatant violations but limiting them to systematic ones automatically excludes many serious human rights violations of another nature. As long as grave human rights violations which are not repeated enough to be classified as systematic continue to be outside the purview of international concern, many countries will continue to take advantage of this and persist in abusing even basic human rights of individuals.

The interest in human rights is waning rather than increasing. The gap between the developed and developing countries continues to hamper a really determined effort to put an end to human rights violations. There is no way to convince poor countries suffering from a variety of deprivations to start becoming interested in the kind of human rights issues that appear to concern industrial countries. I have always thought that proper and effective promotion of human rights can begin only when the economic gap between the rich and poor nations of the world is bridged, if not totally, then substantially. Otherwise, we would all be engaged in fervent hope that would change nothing but leave human rights where they are.

I personally have never been a true disciple of this proposition but have moved in that direction of late, after

sensing the futility of entertaining the opposite thesis. It so happens that economic development triggers a series of human rights developments, starting with education, health and economic power. Meanwhile, the quest for respect for human rights in underdeveloped countries continues to enjoy lip service and is protected by human rights experts elected by these very countries for the primary purpose of defending themselves from accusations and suspicions as well as for the promotion of their own perspectives on this subject.

As for the developed countries of the world, one can also detect an ebb and flow phenomenon affecting human rights. There is hardly a nation, even among the most advanced ones, that enjoys a perfect record on human rights. Many countries have discovered that the enhancement of one set of human rights has often meant sacrificing another. Take for example the experience of the United States and other western countries where the rights of the accused have developed and extended so much that they began to interfere with the effective administration of criminal justice. It became obvious along the way that a point could be reached where the collective human rights of a society would clash with individual human rights. This conclusion has in turn consolidated the thesis of the poor nations that individual human rights must not be allowed to progress to the point where the national rights to security and safety are prejudiced. What all these national experiences portray is a picture of trial and error in the development of human rights that has not crystallised sufficiently enough. No wonder most states sing their own separate tunes when it comes to human rights and make repeated attempts to reinterpret the human rights standards to suit their own situations and conditions.

M. KAHIL



Elections that might tip the balance in Turkey

By Martin Woolacott

EVERY DAY crocodiles of schoolchildren whisper their way through the solemn stone hall which houses the body of Kemal Ataturk, and then carry on, with almost equal reverence, to the adjoining buildings where his motor car and other of his worldly goods are displayed. Highover Ankara, the great mausoleum still fulfils its function as the central shrine of faith in secular Turkey, and in its destiny as a modern, European nation.

But, in recent months, the school visits have increased as those who hold fast to the Ataturk legacy react to the newly-strengthened forces of Turkish fundamentalism, forces which, growing quietly over a decade or more, burst into the open last March when the Refah Party won power in local elections in Istanbul and Ankara, and in a score of lesser cities and towns. Twenty-two by-elections this month will test Refah's strength again, but whether they will be held in now in doubt after a constitutional decision that would have handed the party a further advantage in the contest. It is an index of the anxiety over Refah that the main governing party, the True Path Party, is scurrying about for a means of denying them victory.

The Refah, or Welfare, Party is the successor to previous small religious parties in Turkey, but, unlike them, it commands a fifth, or even more, of the popular vote. In a general election, it could do well enough to take power as a member of a coalition — or it is within the bounds of possibility that it could take power on its own. Turkish political rules are such that 30 per cent of the votes can give you the government.

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of such a shift, if it should ever come. It could mark the end not only for secular Turkey, but for the whole idea that the future of religion in the Islamic World will ultimately be the same shrinkage into the private sphere as in the West. If, after Iran and Algeria, Turkey should fall, the story of modernisation in the Muslim World in the old sense, some would say, would be over. A Refah victory could also lead to internal strife and an army takeover, as in Algeria. There are streets in Turkish cities where shops with the rival mottos

"Sovereignty belongs to God" and "We are following you, Father" (in reference to Ataturk) glower at one another across a few yards of muddy cobbles. Violence, in a small way, is already part of the scene: one outspoken journalist has died, others are under permanent guard.

There is a more sanguine view which, if it turned out to be true, would be equally a turning point. This is that Refah will eventually get its turn in power, but that it will exercise it with relative restraint and, having Islamised the political agenda to some extent, would be ready to leave office when the voters grasp — as they undoubtedly would over time — that Refah has no magic solution to the country's problems.

This, unsurprisingly, is what Refah wants the world to believe. But it is also the hope of some sophisticated Turks, who believe a reassertion of the country's Islamic identity is a necessary part of what is called the Turco-Islamic synthesis. If they are right, then the signpost would point in the opposite direction for other Muslim countries as well. It would proclaim that there is, after all, a middle way between resurgent Islam and Western-style democratic politics. "It would be comforting if that turned out to be true," said a Turkish journalist, "but, if it was your country, would you like to take the risk?" The idea that Refah, if it ever achieved power, would throw away the key, is widespread.

Refah's political style does not reassure. On the practical level, it is based on handing out benefits and acting as a surrogate welfare state for the poorer part of Turkish society. This is a formula that has won adherents for fundamentalism from one end of the Islamic World to the other, but it is, at bottom, no more than bribery. Refah also offers Turkish voters an ingenious but nonsensical formulation which links Islam with the prosperity they naturally crave. By denying Islam and trying to be Western, the argument goes, Turkey has, in some unspecified way, wasted money. So, a return to Islamic ways would be a return to prosperity as well.

Outside parliamentary politics, Refah's unmistakable purpose is to build up a parallel structure, in education in particular, to the point where that of the state can be subsumed. In this they have

benefited from concessions made over the years by mainstream politicians to the Islamic constituency, notably those allowing a modest system of clerics to expand monstrously, far beyond any conceivable need. The products of these schools, together with other young men and women who have been guided in their formative years by living in Islamic hostels, although attending normal state schools and colleges, now form a numerous cadre in almost every profession, that is loyal to Refah and is a ready instrument of social control and political work.

The most comforting view of all is that Refah will never advance beyond a certain point and, like extremist parties in Western Europe, will always be confined to the margins. But the answer to the riddle of Refah is made more difficult by the fact that its rise is part of a slow multiple crisis — economic, military, and political — in Turkey. The cities and towns are full of migrants from the countryside, adding to the numbers of a youthful and increasingly resentful poorer class struggling to get by under conditions of high inflation and unemployment. The gap between rich and poor may not in fact be larger than in the past, but the consciousness of it is different. Television and shopping malls, the whole business of modern consumer display, have seen to that. As in many other countries, what is economically sensible and what is politically wise point in opposite directions. The measures urged on Turkey, like cutting public spending and privatisation of state enterprises, will, at least in the short term, worsen the situation of ordinary people — making them easier targets for the Refah pitch. Those measures are also identified with Europe, since they are part of the country's preparation for customs union, due in 1996, making it possible to equate the Western connection with the troubles of ordinary folk.

Turkey, in addition, has a war on its hands in the Kurdish south-east of the country, involving it in huge expenditures, and causing devastating social changes that, again, hand advantage to the fundamentalists. Turkey's mismanagement of its Kurdish problem is plain. Unable, because of its visceral opposition to anything even

hinting of separatism, to encourage the growth of a moderate Kurdish leadership, it has found itself with no political counter-weight to the extremist PKK, or Kurdistan Workers' Party. The ruthless contest between the PKK and the Turkish army has ended by stripping much of the south-eastern countryside of its population, which has retreated from its razed villages to the bigger towns. There Refah is waiting to scoop in the protest votes of angry and traumatised people, who are also guided by a PKK which wishes to threaten the Turkish government not only with a military impasse, but with the political disaster of a fundamentalist triumph.

The unsettled row over the by-elections arose because the country's constitutional court ruled that the latest waves of refugees, now unable to vote in their old villages, had to be re-registered as voters in their new homes. The decision altered the terms of the contest, since the main governing party had been hoping to scrape by in some seats with the votes of soldiers and civil servants in the region. As long as the refugees were out of the picture, that might have done the trick and restricted the number of Refah victories. But, with their votes counting, the picture seemed very different. No clearer illustration of the intersection of the Kurdish crisis and the fundamentalist tendency can be imagined.

The political parties in Turkey seem content, nevertheless, to manoeuvre around the rising Refah, using it in their games with each other. Right and left are split into two pairs of parties, which alternately contemplate and repudiate merger. The equanimity with which they regard Refah suggests that they believe it can be kept in quarantine indefinitely — or at least that they see many stages ahead before it might become necessary to combine to deal with it.

They may well be right. Yet intelligent people in Turkey in the reflective professions — in the universities, in journalism, among the non-fundamentalist religious — swing from reassurance to alarm in the course of a single conversation. It can't happen here, they seem to say. Or can it? Ataturk may not yet be turning in his grave, but he must at least be stirring.

The Guardian

New Euro-Arab school for managers ready to go

THE EUROPEAN Commission is to provide an Euro-Arab Currency Unit (ECU) 8.3 million grant for the creation of a Euro-Arab Management School (EAMS) in the Spanish city of Granada.

The project comes as part of the European Union's policy of improving overall relations with the Arab World and contributing to its development. The new school will be the first important officially sponsored institute created in the framework of Euro-Arab relations.

Current economic developments in the Arab World, and particularly the domestic policies, deregulation and privatisation and external policies of liberalisation and the encouragement of direct foreign investment, are creating the need for a major increase the supply of suitably trained Arab managers. Existing institutions, and in particular the public sector universities, do not meet these needs.

Assistance for such a programme of institutionalised management development in the Arab World would be provided by a specially designed Euro-Arab Management School.

The school will train Arab teachers of management and will develop curricula and teaching materials for a diploma in management which will be granted by local Arab management training institutions in conjunction with the EAMS. EAMS will also be able to train Arab teachers of management within a special MBA programme, followed by practical teaching experience in European management schools.

High potential Arab and European managers would also follow the MBA programme to qualify for positions of management responsibility in Arab and European companies and organisations.

European Community Newsletter

LETTERS

Bureaucracy at the U.N.

To the Editor:

After reading the interesting article by Maher Y. Massis "Collective security — a stringent necessity that could become reality" (Jordan Times, Dec. 4, 1994), one wonders what has been accomplished by the U.N. and its subsidiary agencies in their years of existence, and at what cost to the people of the world.

We know that wars are still going on except destruction. So why do men continue to fight? And at what beneficial ways for mankind?

I have worked with and alongside U.N. agencies in the Middle East and Africa. Bureaucracy is rampant and we all know what bureaucracy does. Perhaps Schumacher had a better philosophy when he wrote "Small is Beautiful". What has been accomplished in Bosnia or Somalia?



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The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

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Features

Rural south — taking refuge in the past, escaping a fast approaching present

By Dr. Hala Fattah

In 1989-1990, I worked as a researcher at the Queen Alia Fund (QAF), the social welfare agency working in southern Jordan. As a result of my work, which involved several journeys to the rural south, I amassed a number of impressions about popular history and social customs that remained with me when I left for the United States; it is to these impressions that I turn when recounting my initiation into volunteer work in Jordan.

I must explain that as a historian, I have always believed that texts are the primary records of any civilisation, the written codes of mankind's successes and failures. Texts come in different sizes, shapes and colours: they can be stone fragments etched with cuneiforms, literary biographies extolling fourteenth-century Amirs or Ottoman documents registering land and taxes. In the hands of an imaginative historian they can convey the vast sweep and complexity of a particular society at a given period of time. However, they remain a partial record of human endeavour for, regardless of the tonnes of material stacked in imperial museums, libraries, court-houses and land registries,

human experience cannot be compressed in literary texts alone. It must be lived. And this is where the social workers of the QAF have it all over the historians, for they record life in all of its compelling immediacy, quite as a journalist would record fast-breaking news.

Working with the QAF administration and staff made me sensitive to the cultural development of the rural regions. It also made me realise how every aspect of the present is based on the past in rural society and how history, remembered, recreated and reinvented, forms an integral part of the ordinary lives of the people in the south.

In Maan, for instance, I was confronted with a vibrant old lady dressed in a black long dress (madraga) who contemptuously dismissed the bread baked by her daughter-in-law; it had not been baked in a taboun, or saj (over) and was therefore inferior. As it turned out, the old lady had a distinctive family history. She came from a landed family in Al Shobak; her family used to possess fig and olive trees. They grew wheat on many dunums of land. Everything they ate was grown on their property. However, as a result of some land disputes between various clans and

sub-clans in her ancestral village, the old lady had been left bereft, alone and powerless, forced to move in with her daughter-in-law because she had lost everything else. Fortunately she had some resources left. For one thing, she had her memories. They all centred on the incomparable bread baked in her ancestral village. As I sat next to her, the old lady began to describe the smell and aroma that emanated from freshly-baked saj bread, and all at once her language took on clarity and resonance, the words became sharply enunciated, the rhythm was controlled and the memory undiminished by time, loss or dispersal. Yes, the Amir Abdullah had passed by way of Maan to Amman in 1920, but the memory of that event was blurred in her mind. It was something that had happened at a distance, some time far away. But baking bread, now that was an altogether different matter. It was of supreme importance. It signified life, land, family, home. And bread baked on saj, no less! It had meaning in a life that had lost all meaning; it brought back the times of plenty and security, the self-sufficiency and the independence.

In Madaba, I had a similar experience. We had met an elderly sheikh of a local tribe, in a house teeming with children. They came in all shapes and sizes. Some gravely offered us Turkish coffee, and tea. Others curled up next to their grandfather and sat watching us with frank and unblinking curiosity. We asked the sheikh about the history of his tribe. He was silent at first and then he recited parts of Buckingham's travels from memory. The experience was unsettling at first, for here was the authentic representative of a tribal culture prefacing his answer with long, verbatim quotes from an orientalist's selective, and distorted, history of the tribes of Transjordan. It made no sense at first, and then, as the sheikh continued, I began to see the logic of his answer.

He saw himself as the inheritor of a long and valuable tradition, that of the oral historian. Every tribe possessed one, if not several. Oral historians memorised the genealogy and the lineage of the tribe and collected the folk poetry. If the sheikh combined literary facts with oral representation to relate the origins of his tribe, he was only conforming to the best tradition of his tribe. And if he mixed myth with legitimate evidence, where was the harm? History, after all,

had very little to do with truth, it had to do with power and legitimacy. That Buckingham mentioned the sheikh's tribe in the nineteenth century only gave added credence to the tribe's influence, its prowess in war and its longevity over time. Most of all, his history attested to the tribe's physical presence in nineteenth-century Madaba, a fact of supreme importance to the tribal elders, for whom any scrap of evidence was significant when it came to establishing tribal sovereignty over land.

Everywhere, in fact, we encountered people with idealised histories of their individual or communal pasts. In Maan, an important sheikh echoed his contemporaries by opining that the "old days" were better. People were self-sufficient; if you didn't make it or grow it yourself, you asked your neighbour or a member of the hamoula (village clan) for the item. Rarely did you go to the town square; all the items required were either produced at home or bartered with neighbouring communities. Nowadays, the sheikh went on, people had become dependent on the state for everything. When we asked him what brought about the decline of a self-sufficient

economy, he immediately declared: "Education! Education is the cause of all our ills. Education made the tribesman or farmer into a bureaucrat and allowed him to look down on agriculture or pastoralism." For him, education led to other social ills as well, amongst which he enumerated total permissiveness (jibaha) and social irresponsibility.

While the sheikh in Maan may have had reason to complain, for the state had taken over his once-paramount authority and replaced the traditional leadership of the community with a more urban-based municipal government, he was not the only disaffected person in the town. On a visit to Za'tari, one of the smaller centres outside Maan, which QAF representatives described as "our model village," we met an old sheikh, dressed in his thawb and barefoot. He turned out to be a real mine of information. Joined by his son, who ran the Za'tari community centre, he at once began to extol desert life. "Thirty years ago," he began, "we were much happier." This stunned even the most hardened QAF researchers. "How is that possible?" one of them asked the sheikh. "Thirty years ago, you were illiterate, there

were no doctors in the entire region and your harvests were so poor, you sometimes went hungry for months on end," he went on saying.

The sheikh was obstinate. Even though raids and counter-raids were the custom, and even though you could wake up one morning and see all your flock stolen, he insisted life was better. There were no social problems that the larger hamoula could not solve. People saw the clan as their corporate identity which is why when a girl married, her permission was rarely taken in the choice of her bridegroom. The tribe knew best; and because girls were considered as part and parcel of the tribal or village identity, their betrothal signified a cementing of that identity. It was the hamoula that was important, and not the individual.

Moreover, he went on, there were doctors in the village that more than made up for the wonders of modern medicine. These were the "Arab doctors" who practised traditional medicine. Even today, a number of them still make the rounds of the community, practising the art of leeching, cauterisation by knives, burning by means of hot coals and using a mixture of herbs to alleviate everything from the common

cold to pangs of child-birth. As a result, the sheikh claimed, "almost everyone was cured." He even showed us the scars on his leg where he was burned with hot coal.

This was a rather spectacular end to an altogether revealing week of oral testimonies. In the end, it was clear that while every complaint contained a kernel of truth, the recreation of an idealised past in which harmony, order and trust was the order of the day and served as legitimate reinforcement against reality, a panacea against the present. Recalling better times instilled pride in one's family and lineage, but it also went beyond that. Maybe, just maybe, these representatives of an older tribal tradition were also telling us, the epitome of the urban-based culture of Amman, that they still possessed a abundant strategies of communal resistance to the all-encompassing, faceless modernity that was fast transforming the lives of ordinary men and women of southern Jordan and leaving them useless in its wake.

The writer was a professor of history at Georgetown University Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies. She contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Jordan, Israel open embassies

(Continued from page 1)

resented by foreign ministry Deputy Director Biran, just back from Amman, where in the morning he inaugurated the Israeli embassy.

Jordan's red, white, green and black flag outside the seaside hotel brought traffic to a halt as passers-by stopped and applauded.

Charge d'affaires Ramez Qoussous said: "We will start functioning from tomorrow. I hope we will find offices soon."

Mr. Biran told AFP that for the moment the embassy will only be able to issue collective visas and no individual ones as the issue is still being discussed in Israeli-Jordanian negotiations.

Jordan and Israel, which established diplomatic relations on Nov. 27, will exchange ambassadors in about six weeks. Israel has named Ya'acov Rosen, head of the Jordanian desk at the foreign ministry, as charge d'affaires.

Diplomatic sources said Friday the two men could not agree on who to appoint as ambassador.

Seminar voices optimism on future unity

(Continued from page 12)

"We shouldn't be hopeful of reaching agreements," said Ghassan Khatib, director of the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre.

Because of the unofficial nature of the participants and discussions, Mr. Khatib believes, it was possible to reach a certain level of frankness that had previously been only whispered about or discussed privately among decision makers.

"I created a better atmosphere at least as far as the participants are concerned," Mr. Khatib said, stressing that the most that can be hoped for now is that the discussions in the seminar would create debate in the media and perhaps with the

government of both sides.

He believes that the Palestinians and Jordanians are caught in what he describes as "paradox" in the interim period of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

"We cannot reach independence until we define our definition of final status," Mr. Khatib points out. "We have to know exactly the nature of the Palestinian entity that we aspire to."

"If we are thinking of a confederation with Jordan then we have to agree with Jordan first before presenting a proposal to Israel for this final status structure," Mr. Khatib said.

This will need a political will from both the Jordanian and Palestinian leaderships

which many of the participants privately believe is still missing.

"I know that we as influential politicians and intellectuals can do 50 per cent of the work required for a strong cooperation between us but we can only hope to influence the leaders into adopting our vision," one participant who asked he not be identified told the Jordan Times.

A Palestinian participant, who also asked he not be identified, said that Palestinians recognise that they, as opinion makers, are duty bound to try and influence the Palestinian leadership into dealing with Jordan pragmatically.

"We recognise the failing from our side and we hope

Clinton caught in Bosnia policy bind

By David Storey
Reuters

WASHINGTON — With President Bill Clinton weakened and Republicans running Congress, the United States is caught in a policy bind on Bosnia heightened by its promise to send in troops if needed to rescue trapped peacekeepers.

Mr. Clinton has to juggle two key objectives: to maintain Washington's leadership in a unified NATO at a time when the alliance is threatened, and to meet loud domestic political demands for military action to aid Bosnia's Muslims without involving U.S. ground troops in combat.

Thursday's announcement that Washington would provide up to half the troops needed to cover any withdrawal of U.N. peacekeeping forces from the former Yugoslav republic was seen largely as a response to the threat to NATO unity.

Janusz Bugajski, director of East European Studies at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, saw the announcement on troops as "public relations for the benefit of the alliance."

He added: "They realise what it would mean to pull out the peacekeepers — it could be a costly operation, would mean a lot of U.S. troops and it would be a long-term thing that could come back and haunt Clinton later in his presidency."

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said on Friday it was Washington's "hope and expectation" that the need would not arise to withdraw U.N. troops under U.S. and other cover.

But Defence Secretary William Perry said the United States had always helped its allies, adding: "If we did make an exception it would seriously weaken NATO and would certainly destroy our position as a leader of NATO."

Mr. Perry and other U.S. leaders have been scrambling to confirm Washington's commitment to its leadership role in the alliance in recent weeks as serious splits opened with France and Britain over Bosnian policy.

Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke was among U.S. national security leaders talking down the threat to the alliance on Friday. "NATO is not in crisis. Bosnia is," he said. "Strains among member states in NATO caused in part by Bosnia are unavoidable in the aftermath of the cold war."

However, differences with the allies have become increasingly apparent since the Republicans ousted Mr. Clinton's Democrats from control of Congress in the Nov. 8 elections.

Congress, outraged at Bosnian Serb attacks, had already forced Mr. Clinton to back off the neutral policy that European allies and the United Nations had tried to follow in handling the 2½-year conflict.

It has forced Clinton to end U.S. implementation of the arms embargo on the Bosnian government — by cutting off funds for the operation — and is pressing for a unilateral lifting of the embargo early next year.

Incoming Senate Republican majority leader Bob Dole is crusading for an end to the impartial approach complete-



Bill Clinton

ly. He wants the U.N. force withdrawn and the Bosnian Muslims, who outnumber the Bosnian Serbs but are outgunned, armed.

Mr. Dole trumpeted this policy on a trip to Brussels and London last week, creating confusion about both who was running U.S. policy and just what it was.

Columist Charles Krauthammer summed up public fears over this approach on Friday: "Once we order out the United Nations we assume responsibility for the Bosnian civilians. Once we arm the Muslims we assume responsibility for the conduct of the war. And once we begin air strikes, we become a combatant."

Sensitivity over involvement in foreign conflicts, always high in the United States since the Vietnam War, was raised by the abortive mission in Somalia, which ended in humiliation and casualties for U.S.

troops.

The Clinton administration has said its goal in Bosnia is to minimise civilian casualties and stop the war from spreading in the Balkans. But frequent changes in its approach to stopping the fighting have angered European allies.

Its refusal to commit troops to the U.N. operation has disappointed allies who believe only the presence of the superpower would intimidate the warring factions sufficiently to edge them towards a peace deal.

Mr. Perry said on Friday the decision to prepare a contingency rescue force did not change the U.S. decision not to become involved in Bosnian combat and not to send in ground troops on a long-term basis except to help monitor a peace agreement.

"That policy has not changed," he said.

MPs criticise Israeli embassy opening

(Continued from page 1)

the Israeli embassy and its activities.

Speaking in reply to queries concerning the collapse of the five-storey building at Nazal district and the explosion of the gas cylinder facility near Al Hussein Sports City district, Acting Premier Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh said that investigations were going on into the two incidents in order to determine their real causes.

He said that the government has instructed the Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Talal Ureikat to reexamine the whole system of gas distribution and storage of cylinders.

The government has also set up a technical committee

to determine the cause of the collapse of the building in Nazal district. "Once the information has been collected about the two incidents the government would provide their details to the House," Mr. Rawabdeh promised.

Regarding a report of contaminated mothers' milk that the acting premier said that the Health Ministry has begun an investigation into the case and was gathering information about the polluted breast milk.

Abdullah Akaleh, an IAF party member, protested against a report in a local weekly published addresses of prostitutes in Israel so that Jordanians can contact them. Mr. Akaleh said the publication of such advertisements

or reports would severely harm the Jordanian society.

"This action is a flagrant violation of public life in Jordan and requires immediate attention by the government," said Mr. Akaleh.

He urged the public to boycott the unnamed weekly magazine and all others that adopt similar policies.

Several proposals were put forward by a number of deputies concerning such issues as opening agricultural roads, building of schools and opening post offices. These were all referred to the specialised committees to discuss their feasibility.

At the end of the session the House speaker announced that Parliament's next session will be held Wednesday.

Opposition parties stage rally

(Continued from page 1)

opposition not to pursue active opposition to the Kingdom's peace treaty with Israel. The monarch said that any move to that effect "will not be tolerated" and that the minority has to accept the decision of the majority.

Tension between the government and the opposition, which is led by the Islamists, rose after the peace accord was signed on Oct. 26 and the Islamists started attacking the accord in mosques and attempted demonstrations which were banned by the government. The Islamists' efforts to rally support for aborting the accord, however, proved fruitless when the treaty was approved by the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament.

Peace opponents said that the authorities gave them the green light to proceed with their silent demonstration provided they restrict the

number of participants.

"This is a symbolic sit-in," said one participant, claiming that "the street would not be large enough to accommodate peace opponents had they all been allowed to participate."

"(Israelis) are murderers, occupiers and do not fear God; they follow us wherever we go and will not rest until they dominate the whole world," said Huda, a demonstrator.

IAF spokesman Hamzeh Mansour described the opening of the embassy as "an intellectual, political and economic invasion," and charged that the embassy was "a hide-out for spying on this good country."

Asked whether the opposition has any plans for opposing "normalisation ties" with Israel, Mr. Mansour said that he has faith in Jordanians to reject the "imposed moves

towards establishing normal relations with the enemy."

"The opening of the embassy coincides with the eighth anniversary of the Palestinian uprising. This only comes to prove the enemy's intentions to provoke the people who for the past eight years have supported their brothers in the occupied territories and watched the bloodshed and sacrifices they offered as a price for their freedom," said Tayseer Zabari, head of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party.

The opposition pledges to resist all forms of normalisation with Israel through boycotting the Jewish state economically, intellectually and politically until "they pick up and leave," Mr. Mansour said.

"We call upon our brothers to boycott the Zionist enemy and... the Israeli embassy," said a statement issued by the IAF earlier.

On the occasion of the end of the year 1994
The National Music Conservatory/ Noor Al Hussein Foundation
presents

Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein In cooperation with ROYAL JORDANIAN The Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory MOHAMMAD OTHMAN SIDIQ, conductor Thursday, 15 December 1994 - 8:00 p.m. The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre In the program pieces by Verdi, Donizetti, Mascagni and others. In addition to a piece by Jordanian composer Dr. Abdul Hamid Hamam. Ticket price: JD 7	Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Ghida Talal In cooperation with ROYAL JORDANIAN WALEED HOWRANI in a Piano Recital Friday, 16 December 1994 - 8:00 p.m. The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre The Program includes pieces by Schubert, Chopin, Gelalian, Joplin and others. Ticket price: JD 7	Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein in cooperation with Friends of the Liver Patients Society The Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory MOHAMMAD OTHMAN SIDIQ, conductor in A Night of Viennese Waltzes Saturday, 17 December 1994 Philadelphia Hotel - Royal Ballroom The program includes Strauss's Die Fledermaus, The Blue Danube, Voices of Spring, Tales From Vienna Woods, Emperor Waltz and Radetzky March. Ticket price: JD 12 (including canapes)
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Tickets available from:
• Alhila-Abela Superstore, tel. 688481 • Freddy for Music, tel. 692696 • Philadelphia Hotel, tel. 607100 • Royal Cultural Centre, tel. 661026
• Babiche, tel. 661322 • Music Box, tel. 815745 • Romero, tel. 644227 • National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

Clinton announces pan-American free trade agreement

MIAMI (R) — The leaders of 34 western hemisphere nations Sunday approved setting up the world's largest free trade zone by the year 2005, and cracking down on money-launderers, drug-traffickers and corrupt politicians.

The decisions came in a rapid-fire first day of talks at the first summit of the Americas in 27 years — one that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher hailed as the most productive summit he has ever attended.

"It is a real landmark day for our hemisphere, a real day of hope for our hemisphere," Mr. Christopher said at a news conference.

It was left to President Bill Clinton to shed some of the political battle gear he has had to wear recently and announce the biggest accomplishment of the carefully choreographed summit — a historic agreement to set up a western hemisphere tariff-free zone by the year 2005.

Standing under a bright blue sky in the garden of the Vizcaya Palace, an Italian renaissance-style villa on the edge of Biscayne Bay where the summit is being held, Mr. Clinton said the agreement would create the world's largest trading market.

By 2005, the zone would cover 850 million people and stretch from Alaska to Argentina.

Mr. Clinton said this agreement would succeed where other efforts at pan-American economic integration had failed.

"We have got a highly detailed timetable," he said adding talks would begin next month. He said the trade agreement "will produce more jobs, higher income and greater opportunity for all of our people."

The agreement may have been approved quickly at the first full session of the three-day summit but its details were hammered out in months of behind-the-scenes negotiations.

The leaders also agreed to take coordinated action to stop bribe-taking politicians and to crack down on drug cartel money-launderers by confiscating and freezing their assets.

Some Latin American leaders lectured the United States on how it must do more to curtail drug consumption, a Latin American source at the meeting told Reuters.

Puerto Rico's President Alberto Fujimori was the most critical of the United States saying he could not imprison 200,000 coca-growing Peruvian peasants just because the United States wanted him to, the sources said.

Colombian President Ernesto Samper said in an interview with Reuters he was pleased by approval of the anti-drug initiative, which his country had proposed.

"I think it will be a historic definitive step in the fight against drug-trafficking because if we succeed in stopping the profits from drug trafficking being recycled and reinvested in the business then we will hit the business very hard," he said.

"We are talking about big numbers — more than \$500 billion which the drug trade is worth," he added.

Argentine President Carlos Menem, whose barbs against Cuban leader Fidel Castro earned him a hero's welcome from Cuban exiles in Miami, made good on his pledge to bring up the issue of the communist island at the summit. Cuba was excluded from the meeting because it is not a democracy.

The problem was that his fellow summiters were not as keen to discuss Cuba and, according to one source, did not follow up in any great detail.

"Cuba must start opening toward a multi-party representative democracy in order to take part fully in the hemisphere's life," Mr. Menem said, according to an account of the closed meeting he gave reporters afterwards.

Mr. Clinton, adding nothing to Mr. Menem's manifesto, immediately gave the floor to Jamaican Prime Minister J.P. Patterson, who spoke about a totally different issue, a source at the meeting said.

California's controversial anti-illegal immigrant measure, known as Proposition 187, came up in the morning round of talks at Vizcaya, a U.S. official said.

Mexico's President Ernesto Zedillo and El Salvador's President Armando Calderon Sol expressed their concern over the issue which could affect hundreds of thousands of citizens from their countries who live illegally in California.

"President Clinton responded that he was also against the Proposition and outlined his actions against it," said the official.

The Proposition denies illegal aliens and their children the value of legitimate services like schooling and some medical treatment. It is being challenged in court.

Approval of the free trade zone was a triumph for Mr. Clinton's policy of expanding free trade around the world and follows on the heels of such agreements as the North American Free Trade Agreement and GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Heroin output alone is estimated at least \$2.4 billion a year, five per cent of gross domestic product. Some estimates go as high as \$4 billion, but it is difficult to be sure because of the illicit nature of the traffic.

Along with Burma, Pakistan is one of the world's leading producers of heroin: 80 tonnes are consumed locally, and 40 to 50 tonnes are exported, according to experts.

The U.N. report estimates that about 20 to 50 underground laboratories operate in Pakistan's frontier zone, each run by about a dozen people and producing every

day 10 to 15 kilograms of brown heroin, or five to six kilograms of white heroin.

The industry does not generate productive investment and only employs about 1,000 to 3,000 people, the U.N. study says.

Western experts say the bulk of drug profits is not repatriated to Pakistan, but is siphoned off to overseas accounts.

Domestic spending on drugs, estimated at \$1.1 billion annually, harms long-term growth prospects, drains savings, frays the social fabric and widens the gap between the rich, who benefit from the trade, and the poor.

Pakistan, which had practically no drug problems 10 years ago, now has 1.5 million drug addicts out of a national population of 128 million, with a per-capita income below \$400 a year.

There have been many accusations of army involvement in drug trafficking — although none has been substantiated by any evidence.

"If we could get any evidence, it would become a major issue," said a Western diplomat.

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Russia struggles to measure shadow economy

MOSCOW (R) — Russian statisticians have confirmed what economists have said for months — it was hard enough to calculate the size of the economy but the "shadow" sector was big.

This undeclared economy — firms and individuals avoiding tax by failing to declare incomes and revenue — now made up about 20 per cent of Russia's gross domestic product, the head of the state statistics committee Yuri Yurkov said.

The statisticians said they added 40 per cent to the figures they received for goods and services to take account of the shadow or "grey" economy.

"We are pitifully ahead of the whole planet in this," Mr. Yurkov told a news conference. "In Italy, where the 'grey' market is the most developed, the figure is 13 per cent."

He added that Russian output figures did not include criminal activity but took account of hidden volumes of sales, companies working without licences and private individuals involved in unlicensed imports.

Russians took about \$500 million out of the country in September, most of it to buy goods which were not declared, according to customs committee figures, Mr. Yurkov said.

Russia's GDP in January-October was 85 per cent of what it was in the same period last year. Services, where the shadow sector is becoming increasingly important, accounted for 55 per cent of GDP, said Vladimir Sokolov, deputy head of the committee.

The increasing size of the shadow economy meant Russia was forced to develop a whole new system to estimate how big the economy was.

"There are about two million firms on the market... and you cannot just tell them all to give us information. So we have to make our estimates based on alternative information," Mr. Yurkov said.

In Soviet times, statistics collection was a key part of centralised control over enterprises. But Mr. Yurkov said his committee now sought to obtain information to give society an idea of current trends in the economy.

"State statistics is a state tax in the form of information. And the state must guarantee security of this information," Mr. Yurkov said. "Our aim is not to fine firms, but get the data on the basis of equality and not by threats and repression."

He also said a draft law on statistics, which included these points, had been prepared and submitted to the government.

Russia's statistics bodies have been working with experts from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, Germany, France and the U.K., the committee officials said.

They said World Bank experts would recalculate Russia's GDP over the past year to compare methods and correct any mistakes.

But Mr. Yurkov said Russia was currently a difficult case for statisticians.

"We have vast experience in Soviet statistics, they know free market statistics. But nobody ever tried to analyse a transitional period. Especially in Russia," Mr. Yurkov said.

Colombo walks tightrope in battling inflation

Colombo (AFP) — The Sri Lankan government is walking an economic tightrope as it tries to contain sky-rocketing inflation as the World Bank warned that price controls and subsidies could backfire on the economy.

The government's main food importing arm, the Cooperative Wholesale Establishment (CWE), is to increase imports in competition with private traders to bring down food prices, a government spokesman has said.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga's office has accused private traders by 46 points to 1,502 last month reversing a downward trend in the previous two months.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka figures showed.

The food import move came as the World Bank expressed concern that welfare measures promised by Ms. Kumaratunga's People's Alliance in the August and November elections could lead to more economic woes.

The World Bank's South Asia director, Paul Isenman, said the new government's handouts and price controls could stifle production and exports.

"Fixing prices for the benefit of consumers may adversely impact on the incentives for the producers. This would undermine the objectives of increasing production, growth and employment," Mr. Isenman told reporters over the weekend.

A widening budget deficit and "give-aways" will make it difficult for Sri Lanka exports to compete with those from Bangladesh, China, India and Vietnam, he said after talks with Ms. Kumaratunga, who became president last month.

Mr. Isenman was echoing the sentiments of a similar mission here by a 10-member Asian Development Bank (ADB) team last month. Both clearly want the government to accept their prescription for economic recovery by slashing subsidies.

The international lenders have, however, sugar-coated their pill with praise for Ms. Kumaratunga's peace efforts to end the country's dragging Tamil separatist war, which consumes nearly a quarter of state revenue annually.

The country's budget deficit for 1995 was originally estimated at six per cent of GDP, but Justice Minister G.L. Peiris told parliament last month that the shortfall could be a staggering 10 per cent.

Economic growth figures for 1994 have been revised downwards to five per cent from an earlier figure of seven per cent, against growth of 6.9 per cent in 1993.

Mr. Peiris, who is also deputy finance minister, told reporters last week he did not intend to reintroduce capital gains tax on stock market transactions or a wealth tax, but declined to discuss other tariffs.

"We will have to keep a watchful eye on emerging inflationary trends," Mr. Peiris said. "We will have to rein in fiscal expansion in order to stabilise the economy and create the necessary conditions for foreign capital inflows and rapid economic growth."

"We intend to address these problems in the forthcoming budget early next year," Mr. Peiris said while presenting in parliament late last month with a mini budget for the first three months of next year.

China tries to curb lending

HONG KONG (AFP) — China has imposed stringent measures to restrict key commercial loans to strategic industries in a bid to shore up its credit rating of local firms following a spate of bad debts.

The measures came as more generous lenders tightened their own procedures for approving credit to joint ventures, which have mushroomed in the booming Chinese economy, currently growing between 11 and 12 per cent.

There were internal concerns recently to all local governments as well as state-owned banks to limit loans to approved credit limits in major contracts, an official at an affiliate of the Bank of China said.

Authorities have decided to restrict foreign investment to those that meet strategic economic development needs of the country, he said.

Pakistan's economy hooked on drug profits

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Pakistan, one of the world's largest producers of illegal narcotics, is hooked on revenues from the lucrative drug trade, which help sustain the country's impoverished economy but threaten long-term growth.

A report by the U.N. Drug Control Programme says drugs yield the country \$1.5 billion a year in foreign exchange or nearly a quarter the value of legitimate services exports, shoring up the balance of payments and the local rupee.

Heroin output alone is estimated at least \$2.4 billion a year, five per cent of gross domestic product. Some estimates go as high as \$4 billion, but it is difficult to be sure because of the illicit nature of the traffic.

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13 DAYS LEFT for Christmas

The most sentimental present

DAJANI'S

Gold-Gems - House Presents etc.
from JD 20. — (36% sale)
Amra Hotel Shops. 6th Circle. Amman.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Consider carefully those persons you want to add to your present roster of friends, make overtures in their direction. Situations occurring in the outside world will give you the chance to move ahead in a modern way.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get your practical affairs in better order at home and steer clear of a partner who is visionary. Improve your health and appearance.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be with partners and talk over your mutual aims so you get the right results. Cut down on expenses and you can have extra money for the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Plan to add to your present income by utilising your finest talents. Avoid one who can be very drying to you. Be good to yourself.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Begin the week properly by solving problems which have arisen during the weekend. Some fundamental affair is worrisome to you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Have a meeting with close ties and solve some situation properly once and for all. Show that you are steadfast and wise in your activities.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You need more information about how best to get assistance from friends for your finest projects. Be wise towards how you wish to proceed.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) One of the experience can give you fine advice about some monetary matter ahead of you, so is it to your best advantage.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you study that enterprise which interests you from a different angle, you will soon get right into it. Forget that private concern.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) It is important you first talk to an expert before trying to get all of your affairs in fine order. Relax in the evening with friends.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can get together with partners and good friends and get much accomplished which is worthwhile. This is a good day to ask for favours.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be sure you handle these tasks ahead of you exactly as higher-ups expect you to do it. Look for social pleasure in the evening.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You are inspired how to gain your aims in the early morning, so go right after them with enthusiasm. Use particular care while driving.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise - Zircon

THE Daily Crossword by CF Murray

ACROSS

- Cryptogram
- Plant
- Painter of
- Take a hike
- In — (going nowhere)
- Winter song
- Old newspaper section
- Great race
- First and second
- Shanty
- Haphazard
- Casino's capital
- Social
- Appointment
- In time shape
- Tory
- Jester
- Refuge
- "Norma"
- Interrupt (with "in")
- Mashed, in a way
- Sped
- Pull and cart
- Tricky curve
- Dead duck
- Fr. dramatist
- Join
- Kind of pony
- Like lawn
- Musical value of old
- Gossip
- Latin
- Miscellaneous
- College on the Thames
- Haystack
- Beasts of burden
- Wound
- Prebble
- 21st word a sock
- Author Minge
- Hung in the air
- Pines
- Worm away
- R— Roger
- Defect
- Sublease
- Bulk Sp.

DOWN

- Planet
- Vocal
- Fig. capital
- Resign
- Argue
- Wipe out
- Don't of films
- Expert
- Mixed animal
- 37 Auto
- 38 Springer
- 40 Chiropractor
- 41 Smile
- 43 Faddish
- 44 Gamewort
- 46 Code name
- 47 Shattered
- 48 WWII enemy
- 40 Pithed
- 50 Untried
- 51 In action
- 52 Highway
- 53 Apparent run
- 54 Pithed

Puzzle solved:

Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: GLADE QUEER GIMLET FOIBLE
Answer: What the thief got at the computer store — A MEGA BYTE

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

Double Cheese!

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HERMY
DAANP
TRIOGE
SWETID

Print answer here: _____

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DECEMBER 12, 1994

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business daily beat

A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

Plan ready to enliven Dead Sea shore

★ The French company OTH and its local agents Sigma company have completed the main plan to develop the Dead Sea shore which stretches for about 60 kilometres. The plan, which aroused enthusiasm among many local investors, envisages building hotels, tourist villages, amusement centres and public parks. The Jordan Valley Authority will be floating tenders for these projects early next year (Al Aswaq).

★ Studies point out that large amounts of oil shale exist in Shalalah in the Irbid governorate (Sawt Al Shaab).

★ The Natural Resources Authority decided to dig five wells next year to explore for oil in the Rishah area. More exploration work and digging will be conducted in Rishah to consolidate the production of gas (Al Dustour).

★ Knowledgeable sources point out that 15 per cent of imported drugs are destroyed each year because of their expiry date. Higher volumes of locally-manufactured drugs are destroyed more often as they have a shorter validity date, usually between two to three years (Al-Dustour).

★ Prices of fish are going up due to an international increase in prices (Al Dustour).

★ A foreign company in cooperation with some local parties are searching for a large land plot in the suburbs of Amman to build an amusement park similar to World Disney's (Al Dustour).

★ The National Company for Aluminium Industries is requesting the founders to pay the second instalment of their subscription. The company has a JD 12 million capital and is planning to build its factory in Al Jizah (Ziziya), south of Amman. The chairman of the board is Hani Al Haj Hassan (Al Aswaq).

★ The Arab Banking Corporation (Jordan) will open a branch in Ramallah next year as it sees the city as the main centre for businessmen and international financial institutions in the Palestinian territories. The general manager of the bank does not expect Israeli banks to open branches in Jordan because the Kingdom has reached the sufficiency level in the banking sector (Al Aswaq).

★ A major deal was concluded at the Amman Financial Market where more than 1.35 million shares of the Amman Bank for Investment were traded in a single transaction. The deal amounted for about JD 2 million and the buyer was rumoured to be a prominent investor whose main business activity is in Saudi Arabia (Al Aswaq).

Study sees sharp rise in Gulf cement demand

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A construction boom will boost demand for cement in Arab Gulf states to record levels in the next two years and the increase will be fully covered by existing expansion, an official study said.

From 28.8 million tonnes in 1994, cement consumption in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will grow to 29.1 million tonnes in 1995 and a 15-year high of 30.3 million tonnes in 1996, according to the study by the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC).

The GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — currently produce nearly 26.3 million tonnes of cement per year, covering around 95 per cent of the existing capacity, said the study, carried by the official UAE news agency WAM.

But new projects and expansion of existing units will push up output capacity by 8.4 million tonnes per year by

1997. Another 9.6 million tonnes of clinker, a key ingredient of cement, will be added during that period.

The study said the rise in demand was due to a construction upswing as such a sector is one of the most profitable in the region, given the high rents and the absence of other major feasible investment fields.

Around \$3.2 billion have been invested in the GCC's cement industry and the figure is set to rise with the new expansion.

The current gap of around 2.5 million tonnes is being imported, with the bulk of the imports going to Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and exporter. The kingdom also accounts for nearly half the region's cement production, followed by the UAE.

GCC states launched their cement industry during the oil boom of the late 1970s to meet rocketing demand as they embarked on a massive infrastructure drive.

Financial Markets

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (December 5 - December 9, 1994)

AMMAN — The dollar depreciated modestly against the yen and the mark at the end of last week, while it stabilised against sterling. It ended the week 0.19 per cent lower against the mark, 0.53 per cent lower against the yen.

The dollar depreciated against the mark and the yen at the beginning of the week, while appreciating against sterling. The dollar's decline came as many traders liquidated their long dollar positions on profit-taking. The dollar's decline was also attributed to widespread rumours that the Bundesbank and the Bank of France had placed orders to sell the dollar at 1.58 marks.

The dollar depreciated against the yen and sterling Tuesday, while appreciating modestly against the mark. The dollar's decline came following news, that Fidelity Investments would not distribute end of year profits to shareholders of the Magellan Fund. The news spurred fears that investors might liquidate their investment in mutual funds, which had a negative impact on U.S. stocks. But lack of confirmation of such rumours rebounded U.S. stock prices later that day, which curbed the dollar's decline.

The dollar depreciated further Wednesday in view of concern over the implications of the potential bankruptcy of Orange County in California. Analysts indicated that such a crisis might postpone the Federal Reserve's next interest rate hike. But comments by Federal Reserve (Fed) Chairman Alan Greenspan, later in the day, stressing the Fed's determination to fight inflationary pressures by raising interest rates further if necessary, put a floor under the dollar. On the other hand, sterling exchange rates weren't influenced substantially by a Bank of England base rate by 0.5 per cent to 6.25 per cent, as such a step was widely expected.

On Thursday, however, the dollar witnessed substantial gains against other major currencies. It rose on expectations that the Fed would tighten its monetary policy at its next scheduled Federal Open Market Committee meeting on Tuesday 30/12/1994. Comments by the Federal Reserve chairman the previous day, supported these expectations.

The U.S. unit retreated against the yen and stabilised against the mark Friday, while rising slightly against sterling. Reports indicated that trading was quiet ahead of U.S. economic data due the following week. In the mean time, the dollar's decline against the yen came on the back of profit-taking by a number of traders.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.5770 marks, 100.08 yen and at 1.5600 dollar to sterling.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	2/12/94 Close	9/12/94 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.5610	1.5600	(0.06) %
Deutsche Mark	1.5800	1.5770	0.19 %
Swiss Franc	1.3337	1.3360	(0.17) %
French Franc	5.4205	5.4165	0.07 %
Japanese Yen	100.61	100.06	0.53 %

USD Per STD

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7020	0.7040
Sterling Pound	1.0939	1.0994
Deutsche Mark	0.4442	0.4464
Swiss Franc	0.5250	0.5276
French Franc	0.1297	0.1303
Japanese Yen	0.7002	0.7037
Dutch Guilder	0.3966	0.3986
Swedish Krona	0.0000	0.0000
Italian Lira	0.0000	0.0433
Belgian Franc	0.0000	0.0000

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Amman

Oman, Bahrain to link stock markets by early '95

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Oman and Bahrain will soon start linking their stock exchanges as part of plans by six Arab Gulf states to create a common market in line with their economic integration pact, officials said Sunday.

An agreement that will allow mutual listing of banks and companies in Oman and Bahrain for the first time will be signed in Manama in early 1995, said Mahmud Jarwani, director of the Muscat Stock Exchange.

"The agreement has been

drafted and is ready for signing," he told AFP by telephone from the Omani capital. "We will sign it early next year and we hope it will open the way for other Gulf markets to join in."

The agreement follows more than a year of negotiations between the two Gulf nations, which both already permit partial share trading by foreigners. But they are planning to expand such a sphere to attract investment.

The Muscat bourse was set up in 1989 with around 45

banks and companies, which have now mushroomed to nearly 80 institutions.

Turnover exceeded \$180 million in 1993 and their market capitalisation stood at around \$5 billion at the end of the year, according to official figures.

Bahrain's market was also established in 1989 and nearly 33 banks and companies now trade their shares, with a market capitalisation of \$5.6 billion at the end of 1993 and a turnover slightly higher than the Muscat bourse.

Both bourses allow investors from the other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to own up to 49 per cent of their shares.

"I hope our agreement with Bahrain will be the nucleus of joint GCC stock market," Mr. Jarwani said. "It is a viable experience that could apply to other Gulf markets provided they open up to non-national investors."

The UAE, where dealing is conducted by telephone through stockbrokers, said last week it would set up an official floor in 1995 and limited trading would be open to foreigners. "Such a deci-

sion will contribute to the planned GCC stock market linkage," said Zuhair Kaswani, a UAE stockbroker.

Experts said the Oman-Bahrain link would activate their bourses as it would enable trading institutions to find more clients or get more subscribers in case they decide to float new shares to raise their capital.

"The link between the Omani and Bahraini bourses will not be compulsory," Mr. Jarwani said. "It will be up to each bank or company to decide whether to list itself in the markets. But I think such a listing will benefit all."

UAE's Dubai airport gears up for growth

DUBAI (R) — Dubai airport, the busiest in the Gulf, is considering large-scale expansion in response to growing passenger and cargo traffic. Dubai Department of Civil Aviation Director-General Mohamed Bin Bindi said.

The Dubai airport, the second largest of the seven states of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the federation's business hub, handled 79,642 flights in 1993 — an average of 218 flights a day — bringing in 5.7 million passengers.

"In response to growing demand we have a plan to build further facilities for departing and arriving passengers," Mr. Bin Bindi said in an interview.

Expansion plans under study for the year 2000 and beyond included the construction of a new departure building and two underground tunnels linking the proposed building with the existing departure hall, he said.

The construction of "air-bridges" from 22 gates in the planned new building to aircraft was also under consideration. More than 60 airlines fly

into Dubai airport and Mr. Bin Bindi predicted that more carriers would come in soon.

He said the airport's cargo terminal was also set for growth in 1995 to avoid reaching capacity constraints.

Last month, the airport's cargo director Sultan Bin Nasser Al Mansoury said construction of a second cargo agents' building at the terminal would begin early next year to raise capacity to 350,000 tonnes. Last year the facility handled 218,264 tonnes.

Mr. Bin Bindi said the construction of 10 aircraft parking bays at the airport — which began in June — was going well and was expected to be completed within the next few months.

"The 10 new bays and their fuelling hydrants will be finished in a couple of months, which will bring the total number of bays to 36," he said, adding that the cost of the project was about 50 million dirhams (\$13.6 million).

The new bays, capable of handling super wide-bodied aircraft like Boeing 747-400s, would satisfy growing demand "for the next five years or so."

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of defeat to retain his WBA
middleweight championship
with a shocking ninth-round
knockout of John David
Jackson.

Trinidad continued
his stature as one of
boxing's best young cham-
pions, scoring an eighth-
round knockout over Oba
Carr to retain his IBF welter-
weight title.

Carr appeared to take the
first few rounds, but his
Puer to Rian opponent gradually
asserted control, using a long-
reach jab to jab against
Carr's face while punning
away with left and right
hooks.

WBA strawweight
champion Ricardo Lopez
knocked out Yamil Caraballo
of Colombia in the first round
of their bout, then said he
wanted a shot at the WBC
light flyweight title held by
Humberto Gomez.

Lopez, making his 13th de-
fence of the 105-pound (47-
kg) title, caught Caraballo
leaving with a right hook at
1:10 of the first round.



meeting in Monte Carlo (AFP photo)

GP uncertain

The head of the National
Association of Physicians in
Jordan, Dr. Khalid Al-Faraj,
said he was uncertain about
whether a general practitioner
association would be formed
in Jordan.

Dr. Faraj said the associa-
tion would be formed if there
was a sufficient number of
doctors in Jordan to justify
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The association would be
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Shearer strikes twice to keep Blackburn top

LONDON (Agencies) — Blackburn Rovers hung on to top spot in the English Premiership Saturday, though victories for rivals Manchester United and Newcastle kept them on Rovers' heels.

Two goals by English international Alan Shearer were instrumental in a 3-2 home win over Southampton. United won by the same score away to QPR, and Newcastle won 3-1 against Leicester at St. James' Park.

Shearer kept Blackburn on the title trail as the leaders got off to flying start against Southampton.

Bruce Grobbelaar saved a Shearer penalty for the second time this season but was powerless to prevent Shearer scoring his 18th goal of the season from the rebound. Mark Atkins had put Rovers in front after only four minutes.

A right-foot half volley from Matthew Le Tissier pulled one back for the Saints, before Shearer restored the two-goal advantage. Le Tissier pulled another back but the Saints failed to find an equaliser.

Second-placed Manchester United, placing their first match since failing to make the European Champions Cup quarter-finals, fell behind as Les Ferdinand's 30-yard strike gave Queen's Park Rangers boss Ray Wilkins an early success against his former club.

But one of United's new kids on the block — striker Paul Scholes — brought the champions level after 34 minutes and Republic of Ireland international Roy Keane then put them in front just before half-time.

Scholes hit another after the break to put United 3-1 ahead, but Rangers would not lie down and Ferdinand scored his second of the game in the 64th minute.

Newcastle defender Philippe Albert proved his mettle against Leicester. A superb left-foot volley from the Belgian, who had not scored all season, put his team 1-0 up, before David Oldfield equalised after Pavel Srnicek was caught out of position.

Steve Howey's 12-yard header regained the lead for Newcastle. And Albert, fed by Beardsley from a free-kick, made sure of maximum points.

Tottenham, hoping to celebrate their FA reprieve with a good performance against Sheffield Wednesday, fell behind to Ian Nolan's 38th minute strike. But youngster Nick Barry equalised and Jurgen Klinsmann put Spurs ahead in the 72nd minute.

Colin Calderwood, from a Klinsmann rebound, made it 3-1 to complete a fine day for chairman Alan Sugar.

Sugar had received a standing ovation from the crowd following Friday's announcement of the successful appeal

against their deduction of six points and ban from the FA Cup for financial irregularities by a former Spurs regime.

Managerless Ipswich were hit by a first half goal blitz by on-song Nottingham Forest at the City Ground.

Stan Collymore gave Forest a fourth minute lead before Scot Gemmill, Alf Halland and a trademark Stuart Pearce free-kick made it 4-0. Claus Thomson pulled one back a minute before the interval.

West Ham, with only 10 goals to their name all season, got off to a nightmare start at Leeds, who took a third minute lead through Nigel Worthington.

Brian Deane added to the Hammers' misery by claiming a second after 25 minutes but the Hammers ended their scoring drought with two goals from Dutchman Jeroen Boere for a 2-2 draw.

Debutant Ashley Ward, a midweek signing from Crewe, took only 23 minutes to establish his goalscoring credentials for Norwich. He put them ahead against Chelsea at Carrow Road and then added another just before the interval to take his season's tally to 19.

Jamie Cureton sealed a 3-0 win in the 88th minute.

Wimbledon shrugged off the loss of suspended skipper Vinnie Jones, with Oyvind Leonhardsen and Mick Har-

ford giving them a 2-0 win over Coventry. However, Coventry missed a penalty.

In the battle of the new managers at Villa Park, Brian Little's Villa and Joe Royle's Everton fought out a goalless draw.

Liverpool host Crystal Palace Sunday, and Manchester City entertain Arsenal Monday.

Dortmund take lead into winter break

In Berlin, history proved stronger than momentum Saturday when Bayern Munich, coming off a victory in the European Champions League, was held to a 0-0 draw and failed to win at Bremen for the 15th straight year.

Following Wednesday's 4-1 victory over Dynamo Kiev, which put Bayern into the quarter-finals of the Champions Cup, Munich players said they felt the team finally had found a chemistry after struggling under first-year coach Giovanni Trapattoni.

But Saturday, Munich turned in a lackluster performance, dropping it another point behind Bundesliga leader Borussia Dortmund, which won 4-0 at Hamburg.

"This draw is an important result for us," said Trapattoni, whose team's record improved to 7-8-2 and 22 points, in fifth place as the German

league heads into a two-month winter break. The season resumes the weekend of Feb. 18.

"This draw also allowed Dortmund (12-4-1) to extend its lead to four points over Bremen, which heads into the break in second place.

Dortmund got three goals from Michael Zorc to get a victory after two straight draws.

In other games Saturday, 1860 Munich stunned Frankfurt 2-1, Duisburg beat Stuttgart 2-0 and Dresden and Leverkusen played a 1-1 draw. Freiburg blanked Schalke 3-0. Moenchengladbach, Bayer Uerdingen, VfL Bochum, Cologne and Kaiserslautern all played their 17th-round games on Nov. 29.

Against Bremen, Munich was plagued by the same old problem — offence.

Alexander Zickler blew two easy scoring chances in place of French international Jean-Pierre Papin, the hero against Kiev. In the 33rd minute, his 4-metre volley sailed over an open net.

At Duisburg, second-half goals by Oliver Westerbeck and Rachid Azzouzi gave Duisburg its only second victory of the season.

And at Dresden, Rudi Voeller helped Leverkusen, salvage the draw with his goal in the 78th minute. Johni Ekstrom scored for Dresden.

Hussein battle Watani for place in 1st division today

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — While Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxy battle at the top of the standings for the Kingdom's basketball crown, Al Hussein and Al Watani clash Monday at the other end of the standings in an interesting match-up for a place in the first division.

In an effort to upgrade the competition, organisers the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) have decided that two teams will be relegated this season.

Homentmen became the first of two teams to drop to the second division after failing to score the necessary number of at least three wins. The other team will be decided Monday.

Al Hussein find themselves fighting for their place among the prestigious group. However they are one step ahead of their opponents as their first round 79-76 win over Al Watani pushed the latter to the brink of relegation from where it would be saved only with a win of over three points in their upcoming match.

Al Watani, a fifth place finisher after defeating Al Hussein in double overtime last year, had hoped to advance their standing after a good training programme with their new Iraqi coach Mohammad Al Najjar, who was previously at Al Orthodoxy.

Despite an ambitious

lineup determined to surprise other teams at the outset of the competition, Al Watani now find themselves fighting for their place in the division rather than achieve an advanced standing. With their only wins over Homentmen, Al Watani are in real danger of being relegated for the first time since they joined the top teams in 1986.

The JBF last year promoted only one team from the second division instead of the usual two, making the number of competing teams seven for the first time. However, this year two teams will be relegated, and only one will be promoted reducing the number to six as of next season.

Al Hussein and Al Watani are tied in the standings with 13 points. Al Hussein have played ten matches, scoring three wins: 67-54 over Homentmen in the first round, and 93-67 in the

second round match F day, in addition to the 79-76 win over Al Watani in Irbid in the first round.

Al Watani have played 11 matches and have on two wins: 74-49 and 89-4 over Homentmen.

In other matches Monday, Al Jazireh meet title holders Al Ahli, while Al Orthodoxy play Al Jalil.

In their latest matches, Al Ahli managed an 89-52 (4-30) win over Al Jalil, while Al Orthodoxy scored an 8-29 (39-19) win over Watani.

Al Ahli, with an unbeaten record, lead the standings with 20 points and have exceeded the 1000 point mark in the scores. Al Orthodoxy follow closely behind with 1 points and have only one defeat — 79-70 to Al Ahli in the first round final. They will have to win the second encounter on December 15 to force a best-of-three deciding round.

Monday's matches

— Orthodoxy vs. Jalil 5:30 p.m. Orthodoxy court

— Jazireh vs. Ahli 5:30 p.m. Sports Palace

— Hussein vs. Watani 7 p.m. Sports Palace

STANDINGS

P W L SF SA Pts.

Al Ahli 10 10 — 1079 540 20

Orthodoxy 10 9 1 956 560 19

Jazireh 10 7 3 861 736 17

Jalil 10 5 5 558 647 15

Watani 11 2 9 731 1015 13

Hussein 10 3 7 645 894 13

Homentmen 11 — 11 509 1021 10

Cleveland Browns snuff Cowboys; Lions down Jets

ARLINGTON, Texas (R) — The Cleveland Browns snuffed a desperation drive by the Dallas Cowboys inside the one-yard line as time expired Saturday, earning a heart-pounding 19-14 upset victory over the two-time defending NFL champions.

Matt Stover kicked four field goals for Cleveland, which solidified its playoff hopes with the win.

Troy Aikman, who started after missing two games with a sprained right knee, moved the Cowboys 50 yards to the Cleveland 50 with 10 seconds remaining.

He then connected with Jay Novacek on a slant pass, but the Browns' Eric Turner

stopped the Cowboys tight end a half-yard short of the end zone as time ran out.

"We just had to beat him to the punch, don't let him into the end zone," Turner said of the game-saving stop.

Said Browns linebacker Carl Banks: "They talk about it's a game of inches — well, that play proved it."

Leroy Hoard rushed for 99 yards for Cleveland (10-4), which won at Dallas for the first time in 25 years and notched its first 10-win season since 1988. However, Hoard fumbled into the end zone as he was about to score on Cleveland's first possession.

Emmitt Smith rushed for

112 yards and scored two touchdowns for Dallas (11-3), which had a three-game winning streak snapped and fell one game behind San Francisco in the race for the best record in the league.

Smith became the first rusher this season to amass 100 yards in a game against Cleveland.

Stover kicked three field goals in the fourth quarter and has converted 20 consecutive field goals, a club record. His final kick was

from 32 yards with 1:49 left and was set up by a fumbled snap on a fourth-down play.

Aikman had a spotty performance, completing 21-of-36 passes for 188 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions.

"Aikman's a good quarterback but he was a little off today," Cleveland defensive back Antonio Langham said.

Dallas coach Barry Switzer said: "I said earlier in the year sometimes you eat the bear and sometimes the bear

eats you. That's what happened to us today.

"It was Cleveland's day. We were never in synch offensively or defensively."

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Robert Redford & Demi Moore — In Indecent Proposal Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Gary Busey & Michael Pare — In WARRIORS Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD '1' The Age of Innocence Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD '2' Kim Basinger — In GETAWAY Shows: 3:15, 5:00 p.m. only.	very soon Munsa Hijazi (Suma'h) in political satire Hi...Citizen CHILDREN'S PLAY Water Is A Blessing From Heaven Time 10:00 a.m.	Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: The political satire: Al Salam Ya Salam Daily at 8:30 Saturday & Sunday is the theatre's holiday. In English Sundays December 11, 18, only.

Israeli soldier, 4 guerrillas killed in Lebanon violence

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (AP) — Iranian-backed guerrillas killed an Israeli soldier but lost four of their own men in a bold ambush Sunday near Israel's military headquarters in occupied South Lebanon, security sources reported.

The Shiite Muslim Hizbollah, or Party of God, said its guerrillas, hiding living in a cemetery, killed or wounded up to 25 Israelis when they ambushed a patrol on the outskirts of Marjayoun, the main city of Israel's so-called "security zone" along the border.

The clash triggered heavy artillery exchanges in which Marjayoun was hammered. Many of its 15,000 residents took shelter in basements. There were no reports of casualties in the hilltop town, but damage was said to be severe.

"It was a horrible battle," a witness described the four hours of fighting that followed the midday (1000 GMT) ambush.

It was the first such guerrilla operation against Israeli forces in Marjayoun in about six years and capped mounting hostilities over the last week in which nine Lebanese

militiamen of the Israeli-armed South Lebanon Army (SLA) and an Israeli soldier were killed.

The roadside bomb was detonated by remote control as the Israeli patrol of two armoured personnel carriers, a truck and two all-terrain vehicles accompanied by soldiers on foot passed, the security sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Immediately after the bomb explosion, the guerrillas raked the patrol with rocket-propelled grenades and machinegun fire on the road about one mile from the Israeli military headquarters in the occupied zone.

The sources said three Israeli soldiers were wounded along with three Lebanese civilians riding in a car that ran into the ambush. All were hit in the bomb blast, they said.

The SLA's radio station said the civilians were two women and a little girl. Their condition was not immediately known.

Two guerrillas were killed in a firefight that erupted after the ambush and another two were gunned down by

pursuing helicopter gunships in a nearby ravine four hours later, the security sources said.

Assault rifles, rocket launchers, explosives and several days' supply of food were found near the guerrillas' bodies, they noted.

Hizbollah claimed its fighters destroyed one of the patrol's APCs, the truck and another vehicle. But the movement's claims are often exaggerated.

Shortly after the ambush, Israeli artillery fired scores of shells on guerrilla strongholds in the mountains of Iqlim Al Tuffah, to the north of Marjayoun.

Hizbollah pounded Marjayoun with rockets and mortars in retaliation. One shell hit the town's telephone exchange, cutting all communication links.

Israeli warplanes later swooped down on suspected guerrilla hideouts in the south and southeast of Lebanon in mock raids, the sources said. The jets dropped missile-deflecting heat balloons, but did not attack.

The mounting hostilities in South Lebanon, the last active Arab-Israeli war front, came amid signs that a 10-

month deadlock in peace negotiations between Syria and Israel was easing up.

After a visit to the region last week by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Syria said it would agree to contacts with Israel in Washington, a move that could set the stage for the resumption of full-scale negotiations.

Syria dominates Lebanon and any movement on Syrian negotiations with Israel affects the Lebanese position.

Hizbollah, like its backer Iran, opposes the Middle East peace effort.

An Israeli cabinet minister blamed Syria for the deteriorating situation in South Lebanon.

"Everyone knows that the one who's really controlling the existing situation in Lebanon is the Syrians," Agriculture Minister Yaakov Tsuri said after a cabinet meeting in Jerusalem.

About 1,200 Israeli soldiers and 2,500 SLA men garrison the 440-square-mile (1,100-square-kilometre) security zone established by Israel in 1985 as a buffer against guerrilla attacks on its northern towns.

Seminar voices optimism on future Jordanian-Palestinian unity

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian and Palestinian intellectuals and politicians ended two days of debate over the future of their relationship with optimism that their leaders would adopt their vision for unity between Jordan and any future Palestinian entity.

The caution and sensitivity that has been the feature of the first day of the meetings eased on the second and last day as both sides "came to see the human face behind the politics and perceptions," said Senator Kamel Abu Jaber, head of the World Affairs Council which organised the seminar jointly with the Jerusalem-based Arab Economist Association.

The overriding sentiment among most of those interviewed by the Jordan Times was of the inevitability of forging a union between Jordan and an independent Palestinian entity.

Even former sceptics of this union proposal appeared to have shifted opinion as a result of their first-time contact with politicians from the other side.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Said Al Tal said in an interview that one of the most important elements of the discussions in the seminar was the "conclusion that while we came to these meetings as two sides, we found out that we are effectively one side."

"This is a historic and crucial reality that we have to achieve in the future," Mr. Tal told the Jordan Times.

What Dr. Abu Jaber believes caused this new perspective among former sceptics is "the discovery of the depth of the need of the Palestinians."

"We had watched the intifada on our television screens just like everyone else but we did not realise how terrible the situation was until the Palestinian side told us of it during this seminar," Dr. Abu Jaber said. "It was like a new dawn."

In one of the presentations by Palestinian technocrats on the state of the infrastructure in the occupied territories, Jordanian participants were visibly distressed by the data and statistics demonstrating the extent of damage caused by the 26 years of Israeli occupation.

Mr. Tal also concurred with Dr. Abu Jaber on this analysis by pointing out that one of the more important new elements that has come to be realised by the Jordanian participants is "the Palestinian situation under occupation, their problems, their hopes and aspirations."

"We hope that the conclusions and feelings behind this seminar will reach the minds and hearts of decision-makers from both sides," Dr. Abu Jaber said.

"Both leaderships should realise the depth of feelings that is coming out of this seminar. It is like we have discovered each other for the first time," Dr. Abu Jaber said.

"This is the first time that Jordanians and Palestinians openly and frankly discussed their perceptions without emotions," said Dr. Jad Ishaq, who heads the Palestinian delegation on environment to the multilateral negotiations.

Dr. Ishaq, who is also the director of the Palestinian Applied Research Institute said he felt the "mistrust" that had characterised the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship had started to dwindle.

"Mistrust is dwindling," Dr. Ishaq told the Jordan Times in an interview. "This seminar, although we are participating on an individual basis, will set the face of a new type of relationship between us which will have a sound basis."

"I think the social, ecological and other forces are all leading us to one thing: Jordanians and Palestinians will forge warm relations that will lead to an inevitable unity that is mutually beneficial."

The warm atmosphere that permeated among the participants on the last day of the seminar however did not cloud the thinking of politicians on either side that their hopes for cooperation and unity hinges on many political factors that have to be addressed not least of which is a political will from the leaders of both sides.

(Continued on page 7)

Prize is nice but peace is still a dream for Arabs and Jews

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli and Palestinian commentators appeared unanimous Sunday in concluding that the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to their leaders may be too much of a good thing too soon with so much peace yet to be made.

"In a play on words on the worn journalistic expression 'too little, too late,' there was last night in Oslo too much and too soon," wrote columnist Yoel Marcus in Israel's Haaretz.

The best-selling Palestinian newspaper Al Quds commented that there was a discrepancy between the slogans of historic reconciliation and peacemaking and the reality of struggle and differences in carrying out the peace deal.

"This discrepancy is pushing the Palestinian side to wonder about the credibility of giving the Nobel Prize to the Israeli side," Al Quds, published in Arab East Jerusalem, said.

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recipients of the prize Saturday, are reluctant to budge in light of Muslim militant attacks that have killed scores of Israelis.

Israelis were split on whether Rabin and Mr. Peres should even have shown up for the ceremony in Norway. In a survey of 501 people for Israel's Channel 2 Television, 54 per cent said yes and 46 per cent no.

Israeli commentators were impressed by a rare flow of compliments between Peres and Rabin, longtime political rivals both in their early 70s, and credited the 65-year-old Arafat with giving the speech that stole the show.

They hailed it as Arafat's "most conciliatory" speech since peacemaking began, saying that for the first time he spoke with some understanding of the Holocaust in which six million Jews were systematically killed by the Nazis during World War II.

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Hutu gangs murder witnesses of Rwandan genocide

KIGALI (R) — Witnesses of genocide attacks on minority Tutsis in Rwanda are being singled out for execution by extremist Hutus in refugee camps in southwest Rwanda, a U.N. spokesman said in Kigali Sunday.

Captain Stephane Grenier said violence had increased in the camps in this area. "People have been killed with machetes and in grenade attacks," he added.

U.N. officials said the murders appeared to be the work of gangs from the former Rwandan army, which was ousted by the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in July, and members of the Hutu militia known as the Interahamwe who were responsible for the attacks on Tutsis.

Between 500,000 and one million Rwandans, most of them Tutsis, died in the violence that marked the last days of the former Hutu-led Rwandan government after President Juvenal Habyarimana died in a plane crash in Kigali.

"We have reason to believe that many of those executed in the refugee camps have been singled out because they witnessed some of the genocide attacks," Capt. Grenier said.

"In other cases, the parents of Rwandans who have left the camps to return to their former home villages have been killed," Capt. Grenier said.

Extremist Hutus have threatened violence against any one accepting the invitation of the new Rwandan government to return to their former homes.

Aid workers say that few of those who are being forced out of camps being closed down are returning to their former homes. Instead, many are moving into nearby refugee camps, while about 100 a day are crossing into neighbouring Burundi, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

"The government says that the forcible moving out of refugees is being done to increase internal security — but instead it looks as though they will increase insecurity," said the U.N. source.

Last month troops of the new government closed down Kaduha Camp and last week they went to another camp at Rukhondo, addressed the refugees there, and tore the plastic sheeting off some tents. The following day 10,000 people were on the move, the aid worker said.

But the end of this week, a new Rwandan government wants Rukhondo and Cyanka camps, with a total population of 75,000, to close down.

The Rwandan government has given 85,000 refugees until the end of December to move voluntarily out of the Kibeho camp, the main camp in the former security zone established by French troops.

passage, he added. Libyan police have said that most of the Palestinians had Egyptian travel documents and had entered Libya recently from Egypt.

Militant shot dead in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian police shot dead an Islamic militant in a gunbattle as they tried to arrest him in the southern town of Assiut Sunday, the interior ministry said.

Mohammad Sherif Al Wazzan, a student in the town of Manfalut, was "wanted for his involvement in several terrorist attacks," the ministry said. Police "forced the door of his home where he was hiding in the town of Assiut," 380 kilometres (235 miles) south of Cairo, it said. "He opened fire on the policemen who retaliated, killing him on the spot. They discovered a pistol near the body."

The shooting raises to 523 the number of people killed since Muslim militants launched a campaign in March 1992 to overturn the secular government of President Hosni Mubarak. Interior Minister Hasan Al Ali told reporters Saturday that "human rights cannot be applied to protect murderers and terrorists."

Britons demand release of Vanunu

JERUSALEM (AFP) — A delegation from the British committee for the release of nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, jailed for 18 years for espionage, has arrived in Israel to protest his continued detention. But the prison authorities refused to allow them to enter Ashkelon jail to visit Vanunu, who was kidnapped and flown back to Tel Aviv after he disclosed Israel's nuclear weapons programme to the London Sunday Times in 1986. And police confiscated the group's passports for several hours on Saturday when they tried to demonstrate outside the jail south of Tel Aviv. The delegation, including actress Suzannah York, lawyers, journalists and a vicar, hoped to meet Israeli President Ezer Weizman later Sunday. Vanunu, who is kept in solitary confinement, revealed that Israel had built about 100 nuclear bombs, despite the official government line that the Jewish state will not be the first country to introduce nuclear arms to the Middle East. The British military reviews Jane's recently said Israel has about 200 nuclear bombs.

Saddam hears report of Aziz' Russia trip

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein chaired a meeting of the country's highest ruling body, the Revolutionary Command Council, following a trip to Moscow by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. The news agency INA said Sunday. Aziz held talks with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev Wednesday on the international sanctions slapped on Iraq more than four years ago. Russia helped to mediate in a recent build-up of tension in the Gulf when Iraq massed thousands of elite troops on the border with Kuwait which Baghdad invaded in August 1990 and occupied for seven months. A Russian-brokered initiative led to Iraq's formal recognition in November of its neighbour's sovereignty and borders. But even though that was a key U.N. demand for lifting the sanctions, the U.N. Security Council decided Nov. 14 to renew the embargo which has crippled the Iraqi economy. Parliamentary Speaker Saadi Mehdi Saleh also took part in the meeting, INA added.

'France offers to mediate in Algeria'

RABAT (AFP) — France has proposed acting as a mediator in the escalating conflict between the Algerian government and Islamic militants, a spokesman for the Muslim activists said here. Rabah Kebir, spokesman for Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in exile, was quoted by the weekly Maroc Hebdo newspaper as saying he was informed of the offer at a recent meeting with an envoy of Interior Minister Charles Pasqua. Kebir said the meeting was "useful but stormy," with the envoy, named as "Jean-Charles Marchiani, insisting that "the Algerian government is sovereign" inside the country.

2 Palestinian children freeze to death

SALLUM, Egypt (AFP) — Two Palestinian children have frozen to death on the Egyptian-Libyan border after being trapped there with their families since the beginning of December, border guards here said Sunday. The two boys, aged 10 and 12, died on Saturday because of the "difficult weather conditions," they said without identifying the children. Thirty Palestinian families have been sleeping in the open-air on the border after being expelled from Libya to Egypt, which refuses to let them enter. "Talks are under way between Egypt and Libya to try to settle this affair," a security official said. Egyptian authorities have demanded that the families obtain confirmation from Israel that they will be allowed to enter the Palestinian self-rule areas before allowing them to cross border, according to an officer at the border post of Sallum in northwestern Egypt. "The authorities want to make sure that these Palestinians are not planning to settle permanently in Egypt and will go straight to the Palestinian territories across Egyptian territory," he said. Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority have discussed ways of guaranteeing their

6 Islamic extremists killed in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Six Islamic militants were killed by security forces in Oued Berkeche, western Algeria, the security services said Sunday. The service said the six were killed Friday when they were discovered by its troops acting on a tip-off, near the western city of Ain Temouchent. Five machine-pistols, a hunting rifle and three home-made bombs were recovered during the search, the service added. The latest killings bring to 56 the number of armed Islamists killed by the Algerian security forces during December, according to an unofficial toll.

500 children airlifted to Sudan

NAIROBI (R) — Nearly 500 children separated from their families for up to six years by Sudan's civil war have been reunited with their families, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) said Sunday. The children, mostly boys, are aged between nine and 16. UNICEF, which organised the airlift of the children from a camp at Lafon in Sudan's eastern Equatoria province last week, said security and health conditions there had deteriorated. "Since early November, 22 children died there from dysentery and malnutrition-related diseases. Another 73 received emergency medical treatment in Lafon until they were well enough to join the airlift," a spokesman in Nairobi said. They had been living there since July, when they arrived after a two-month trek to escape renewed fighting near Nimule, on the Sudan-Uganda border. Many died during the journey, and another 21 died soon after reaching Lafon, UNICEF said. Wearing brightly-coloured T-shirts given to them by UNICEF, the children were flown out in six plane-loads last week to the villages of Leer, Duar, Ayod and Fangak in Sudan's Upper Nile Province. The villages are under the control of the Southern Sudan Independent Movement (SSIM), a rebel group fighting both the Khartoum government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), a rival guerrilla organisation.

Indian troops complete Kismayo pullout

MOGADISHU (AFP) — The last group of some 200 Indian U.N. troops left the southern Somali port city of Kismayo Sunday, U.N. military spokesman Major Zubair Chattha said. He said the pull-out was carried out "professionally" without any untoward incidents reported during the phased withdrawal of the 1,000 soldiers stationed in the city. The Indian troops have been in Kismayo for one year. The U.N. troops, now down to around 15,000, are in the process of pulling out from his lawless Horn of Africa country, which appears in danger of returning to full-scale civil war. The withdrawal is due to completed by March 31. Meanwhile sporadic crackle of small arms fire continued Sunday in Mogadishu, the Somali capital, where inter-clan fighting has killed some 28 people.

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COLUMN

Mrs. Clinton urges summit wives to help children

MIAMI (R) — U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton urged all the wives of North and South American leaders to "raise our voices" on behalf of children trapped by hunger, poverty and homelessness.

Mrs. Clinton hosted a symposium on Children in the Americas for the wives of the leaders of the 34 nations attending the Summit of the Americas which concludes on Sunday. "When it comes to children's issues, women have a special calling," Mr. Clinton said in an address to the group. "And that's why we have a duty to raise our voices for the voiceless — our children, the youngest and most vulnerable among us."

Mrs. Clinton, who has generated controversy during the first two years of her husband's presidency for her high-profile stand on health care and other issues, urged the wives of hemispheric leaders to publicly champion the needs of children. "Each of us must find a venue appropriate to our own situation as first lady, or government representative," she said. "But whatever role we choose represents a rare opportunity to make a difference in the lives of tens of millions of children — and in the future of all the Americas."

Harrods ejects wheelchair protesters

LONDON (R) — Security staff at Harrods forcibly ejected disabled people protesting against the department store's policy of banning some kinds of wheelchair. The 20 protesters, all of them in wheelchairs, rolled into the huge store at the height of Christmas shopping. "We want to see the manager," they shouted, struggling as security personnel pushed and carried them out. "We came to Harrods because they have a policy which discriminates against disabled people," said one of the protesters, Liz Carr, 22. "We feel very strongly about the world's most famous store treating disabled people in this way."

A spokesman for Harrods said all but the largest mechanised wheelchairs were allowed into the store, which is filled with narrow, meandering aisles. "We do allow all wheelchair users into the store and are happy to receive them, other than the very large electric wheelchairs, which are similar to golf trolleys," he said.

Prisoner wants tougher sentence

MELBOURNE (R) — An Australian prisoner has appealed for a tougher jail sentence after landing back behind bars only seven hours after being freed from a 13-year term for rape, according to a newspaper report Sunday. Melbourne prisoner Eric Geoffrey Cahill threw a brick through the window of the Office of Corrections in South Melbourne only seven hours after being released last Monday to get himself back in jail, the Sunday Age of Melbourne said. When told the incident would land him only one month in jail, Mr. Cahill said that wasn't good enough and appealed in court to have the term extended for two years. He said he is simply not ready to re-enter society, the Age said. Mr. Cahill, 41, sentenced in 1981 for a series of rapes and other sex crimes, refused to leave prison grounds when freed last Monday.

Bette Davis' Rolls Royce fetches \$500,000

NEW YORK (AP) — A 1950 Rolls Royce that once belonged to Bette Davis was auctioned to an anonymous bidder for \$500,000. The U.S. movie star's beige-and-burgundy silver cloud was later owned by Mike Todd during his marriage in the late 1950s to Elizabeth Taylor, after that, the car was bought by actress Diana Rigg. Davis' car was one of 40 sold at Sotheby's from the private collection of Michael Schudroff, who is closing his Manhattan Rolls Royce dealership.

Arafats choose baby names

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief Yasser Arafat's new baby will be called Ammar if it is a boy and Zahwa if it is a girl, his pregnant wife Suha told an Egyptian newspaper Sunday.

The 65-year-old veteran Palestinian leader is "very happy" about the couple's first child, Suha told Al Shark Al Awsat newspaper. She said the baby would be a "child of peace."

Mrs. Arafat told the newspaper she was definitely Arafat's first wife, after Israeli press reports that the PLO chairman had been married before.

"This information is false and is aimed at tarnishing Abu Ammar's reputation," she said.

Suha married Mr. Arafat in secret July 17, 1990, but the union was only disclosed in 1992. Before their marriage, she worked as his economic advisor.

Until then, Mr. Arafat had always declared that Palestine was his only love.

However as the happy news broke, so did an article in the Haaretz newspaper saying Mr. Arafat was married to Neila Yassin, also known as Lim Nasser.

Asked whether she would prefer a boy or a girl, the Palestinian first lady said "there is no difference, everything God gives is good."

She had earlier told Israeli radio that the baby would be a "child of peace."

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